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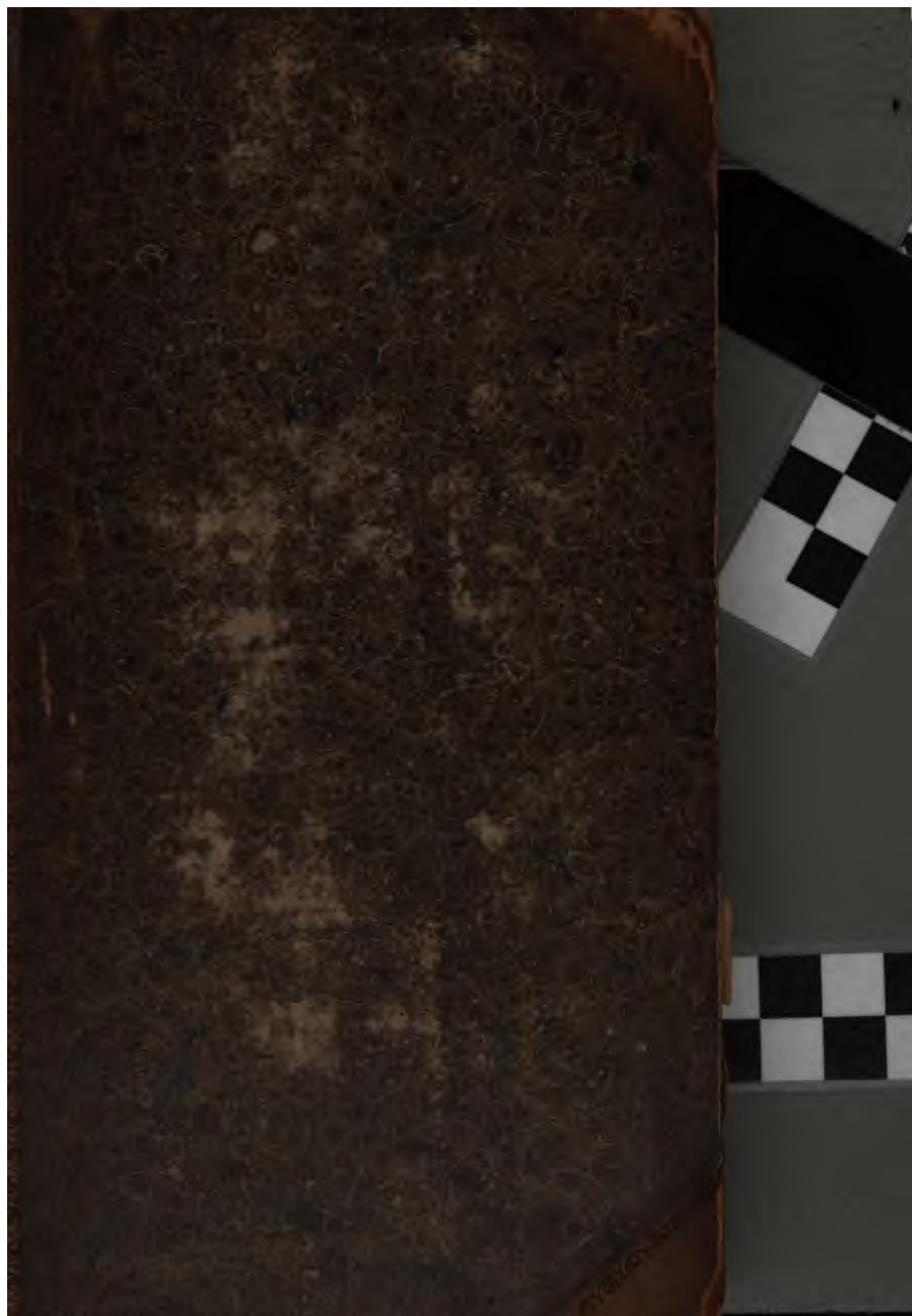
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**MEMOIRS**  
**OF THE**  
**MEXICAN REVOLUTION;**

**INCLUDING**  
**A NARRATIVE OF THE EXPEDITION**  
**OF**  
**GENERAL XAVIER MINA.**

To which are annexed

**Some Observations**  
**ON THE PRACTICABILITY OF OPENING A COMMERCE**  
**BETWEEN**  
**THE PACIFIC AND ATLANTIC OCEANS,**  
**THROUGH THE MEXICAN ISTHMUS, IN THE PROVINCE OF OAXACA, AND AT THE**  
**LAKE OF NICARAGUA;**  
**AND**  
**ON THE VAST IMPORTANCE OF SUCH COMMERCE TO**  
**THE CIVILIZED WORLD.**

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**BY WILLIAM DAVIS ROBINSON.**

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**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**VOL. I.**

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**1821.**



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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**T**HE arduous struggle for independence, so long maintained in the Spanish possessions of America, has, from its commencement down to the present eventful crisis, never once ceased to be an object of deep interest to the world. The extent, the fertility, the rich and varied produce of these possessions, give to them an importance which it is impossible to over-rate, and easily account for the interest which the people of every country—but, most of all, the people of so eminently commercial a country as England—have always taken in this struggle. Here, all classes and descriptions of persons may be said to have espoused the cause of the South Americans. The young, the generous, and the brave, could not remain unmoved spectators of a contest for emancipation from a grievous and oppressive yoke; the philosopher and politician looked to the incalculable influence of the issue, in promoting the welfare of mankind, and adding to the means of human enjoyment; and the merchant and manufacturer saw, in regions hitherto almost closed to commercial enter-

prise, a boundless scene for his operations, and inexhaustible mines of wealth.

All the possessions of Spain in America have been more or less the theatre of hostilities ; and details of the different events in most of them have, from time to time, been published, and received with avidity in this country. But we know nothing, or next to nothing, of the progress of the Revolution in Mexico, by far the most important of the possessions of Spain in the New World, whether considered with respect to the richness of its mines, its extent of fertile territory, its population, or its advancement in the arts of civilized life. The names of some of the Revolutionary Chiefs of Mexico have indeed been occasionally mentioned in newspapers, and it is sufficiently known that the celebrated Xavier Mina landed with a small force on the Mexican coast. Extracts, too, from Spanish Gazettes, containing pompous accounts of the defeat of Insurgents, and of the destruction of Mina and his followers, have from time to time found their way here ; but this is the whole amount of our knowledge with respect to Mexico.

That no information has yet been received from any of those who have risen against the authority of Spain, is chiefly owing to the peculiar nature of the country. In most parts of America, the population and cultivation are greatest along the sea-coast, and gradually diminish as we

recede from it. But the usual order of things is reversed in Mexico ; here the interior is thickly inhabited, while the coasts are almost deserted. The wealth and population are concentrated on an extensive and elevated Table Land, formed by mountains connected with the vast chain of the Andes, which traverses South America throughout the whole of its length. On this Table Land, which is as high above the level of the sea as the passages of Mont Cenis, St. Gothard, or St. Bernard, all the advantages of a temperate climate are enjoyed under the torrid zone: but this delightful region can only be reached by passing through the scorching and thinly inhabited plains of the coast, and by an ascent as difficult as the passages of the Alps. When the Spaniards discovered Mexico, the population was distributed in this manner, and the comparative unhealthiness of the warm regions of the coast has hitherto deterred them from attempting to avail themselves, as they might, of its superior fertility. They have not even a secure station on the Atlantic coast of Mexico, but have hitherto entrusted its maritime protection to the Havannah. Hence the difficulty of obtaining any information, except through Spain, of the events which take place in Mexico. Without possessing a station on the coast, the Patriots can have no communication with other countries, and the most dreadful war may be raging for years in the interior

of Mexico, while the rest of the world, with the exception of Spain, may hardly have even a suspicion of its existence.

Notwithstanding, however, the pains taken by Spain to prevent the world from obtaining a knowledge of the events which have taken place in Mexico since the commencement of the South-American war, an individual has at length succeeded in drawing aside the veil which has hitherto concealed them: Mr. ROBINSON, the author of the following work, an American merchant of respectable connexions, and much esteemed in his own country, has been enabled to give an account of the various operations of the Patriots of Mexico, from the origin of the Insurrection down to a late period, including a very minute and highly interesting account of the operations of Mina, from the outfit of his expedition to its final destruction. This gentleman had opportunities of becoming acquainted, not merely with the transactions of Mexico, but with South-American affairs in general, which have fallen to the lot of very few.

The details of these transactions are given in the Appendix to the following Work, and likewise a full account of the hardships which he endured, in consequence of his visit to that country; for the Spanish government, it would appear, had determined to subject Mr. Robinson to a rigorous imprisonment in a fortress on the coast of Africa.



All intercourse with the American possessions of Spain, without its special permission, is interdicted under the severest penalties; and, therefore, Spain might consider the visit of Mr. Robinson to Mexico punishable, as a violation of its laws, with imprisonment or death. But it appears, that the reason which chiefly induced the Spanish government to adopt this harsh determination, was the knowledge that he was intimately acquainted with the affairs of Mexico: many valuable communications had at different times been made to him, and documents of a very important nature had come into his hands; we can hardly wonder, therefore, that a government pursuing the policy of Spain should wish to prevent Mr. Robinson from laying this information before the world.

The journal of a gentleman who accompanied General Mina from England, and acted for a time as his commissary-general, and the correspondence of the general with various individuals in Europe and the United States, are the authorities of which Mr. Robinson has chiefly availed himself in his account of Mina's unfortunate expedition.

From the romantic nature of the achievements of this gallant warrior and his little band, this part of the work will be read with deep interest by every description of readers. The historical narrative will be found as instructive as it is interesting. It has shewn the world the

feebleness of the tenure by which Spain retains possession of Mexico. A small band, at no time exceeding 308 in number, advanced from Sotola Marina; fought its way into the interior of Mexico, beating on different occasions large bodies of men sent to oppose its advance, and succeeded in forming a junction with one of the revolutionary bands. In his first battle, that of Peñillos, 172 men, with a loss of 56 killed and wounded, beat a force consisting of 680 infantry of the European regiments of Estremadura and America, 1100 cavalry, and a rear-guard of 300. Mr. Robinson maintains—and it is hardly possible to read this narrative without agreeing with him—that if Mina had then had 1000, instead of 150 foreigners, he might have marched at once on the capital of Mexico, and put an end to the authority of Spain;—and that two thousand foreign infantry, under the banners of freedom, led by intelligent and gallant officers, would overturn the Spanish government of Mexico in less than six months from the day of their landing, either on the coast of the Pacific Ocean, or on that of the Gulf of Mexico. Had it been known, that a much smaller force than that which left Europe under General Devereux could have effected the emancipation of the richest and most valuable of all the Spanish colonies, it is more than possible, that long ere this it would have ceased to be in the possession of Spain.

The late revolution in the government of Spain, has, in some degree, altered the relations between that country and America, and given rise to expectations of peace and reconciliation. What the result of the attempts now making with that view may be, it is impossible to say. One thing, however, is certain,—the old colonial system of Spain is for ever destroyed; and whether or not the American possessions of Spain shall hereafter remain connected with it in a state of entire independence, the inhabitants will never again submit to their former exclusion from the rest of the world. They have tasted the advantages of an unrestricted commercial intercourse, and they never will consent to forego them. Civilization and intelligence will follow in the train of commerce; these fine regions, hitherto sacrificed to the narrow and barbarous policy of Spain, will be enabled to avail themselves of the inestimable resources with which they are blessed; and Great Britain will have no cause to regret the efforts which some of her sons have made in the struggle for this emancipation.

The Author has brought forward much valuable information on the subject of a communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Humboldt fixed on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as the narrowest part of America, and the most favourable on the whole for such a communication. Mr. Robinson fixes also on

this Isthmus, and adduces a number of proofs of the facility with which it might be opened. In his statements on this subject, and indeed throughout the work, he never loses sight of the interests of the country of which he is a subject; and he looks forward with seeming confidence to the day when the fleets of the United States shall protect the entrance to the canal of Tehuantepec. But, whatever may be the future destiny of North America, England is not the power which would reap the smallest benefit from this communication, or which is least interested in promoting it.

The future destiny of America opens a wide field for conjecture, into which we cannot now allow ourselves to enter. We may observe, however, that it requires little foresight to see, that it will soon be productive of great changes in the world. We do not merely allude to the effects which must soon be produced by the application of improved machinery to its mines. Its proximity to Asia will soon give rise to important changes in that part of the world. Mr. Crawford, in his valuable work on the Indian Archipelago, has shewn, that the empire of Japan might be conquered with the greatest ease by an expedition from an American settlement on the Pacific; and, thus, parts of Asia, protected from Europe solely by their distance from it, may soon probably fall under the domination of America.

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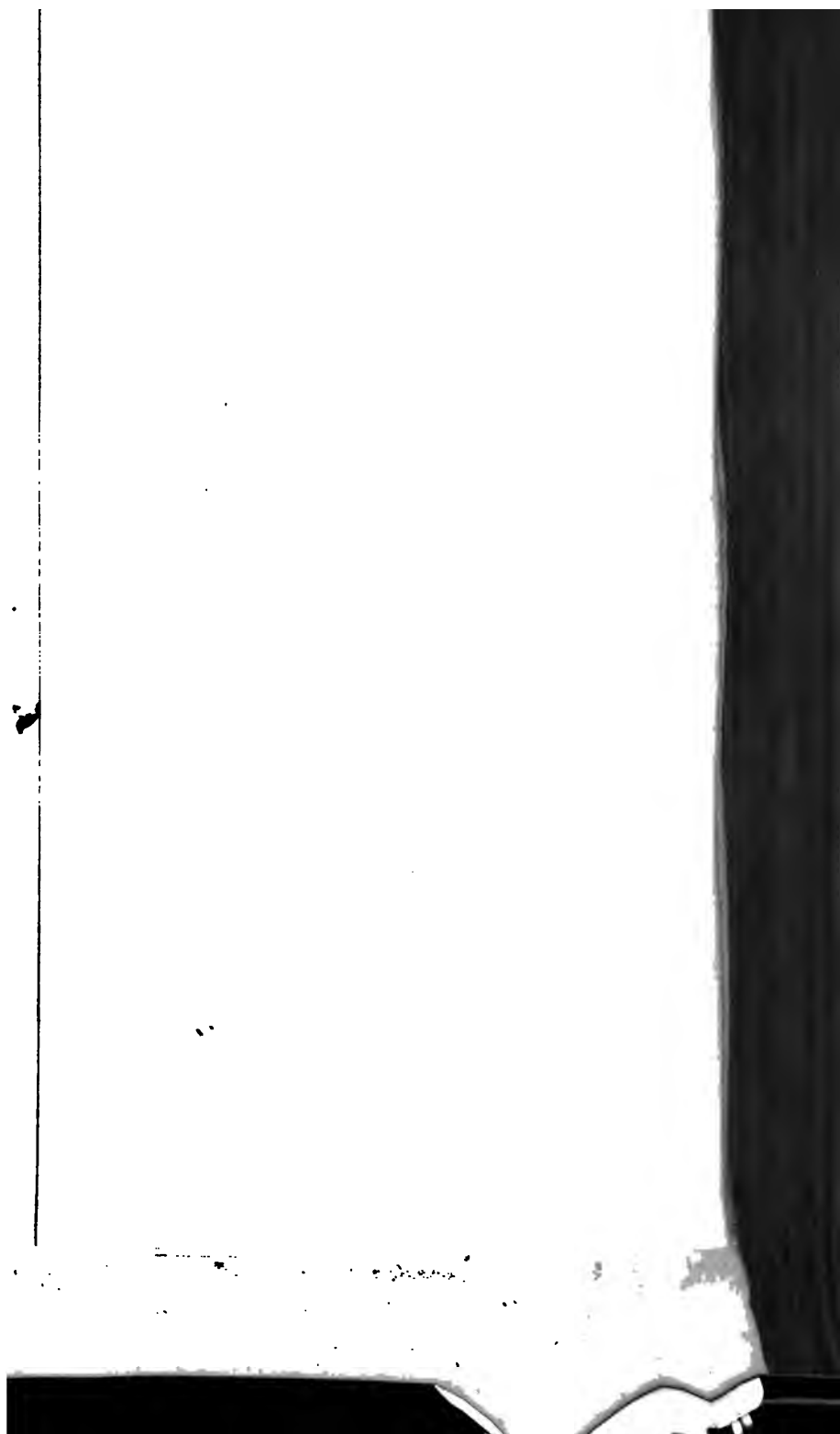
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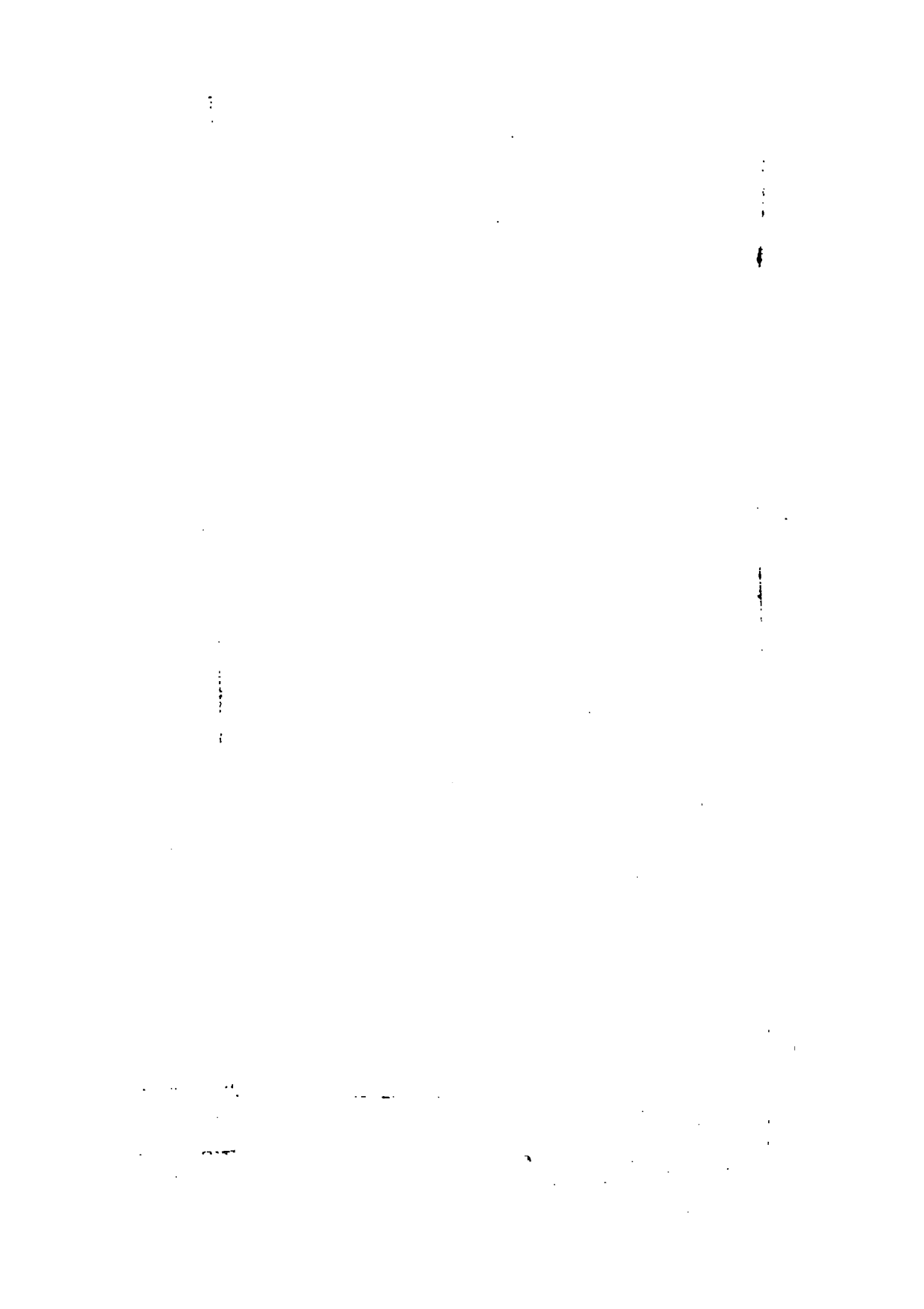
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## INTRODUCTION.

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It is incumbent on every person who presents a statement of important events to the public, to unfold the sources from whence he derives his information. The writer therefore, in the first instance, with great pleasure acknowledges his obligations to Mr. James A. Brush, a gentleman who accompanied General Mina from England to Mexico, and was finally appointed his commissary-general.

The journal of Mr. Brush was submitted to the inspection of the writer, with the liberty of making such use of it as was thought proper, and from it he compiled the narrative of the military operations of General Mina, of the fidelity of which not the least doubt exists in his mind; indeed, all the essential facts contained in the narrative were fully corroborated by information derived from various sources, while he was in Mexico, and by the testimony of the few surviving officers of Mina's expedition, whom he met with in Mexico and in the United States, and who were carefully consulted on the subject.

To John E. Howard, Esq. of Baltimore, he likewise feels under particular obligations, for having furnished

him with the greater portion of the facts contained in the biographical sketch of Mina, and indeed for having infused into that sketch more animation than it would have been in his power alone to have given it.

The perusal of the correspondence of Mina with various distinguished individuals in Europe and the United States, from which the writer obtained important information, was politely afforded him by General Winfield Scott, to whom he likewise begs leave to offer his acknowledgments.

The writer has also examined, with much attention, files of the Mexican, Havana, and Madrid gazettes, for the last ten years; and however ridiculous or exaggerated may be their statements of the operations of the royal forces against the patriots, one feature of the story, we may be assured, they have not too highly coloured—the *cruelties exercised by them*.

It is from such indubitable sources, and others of a similar character, which were submitted to his inspection in Mexico, and other parts of Spanish America, as well as from personal observation, that the writer has been enabled to draw the dark-hued picture of Spanish inhumanity which is exhibited in the following pages.

The information embodied in the chapter treating of the Route to the Pacific ocean, has been derived from various Spanish and British authorities: among the latter, William Walton, Esq. of London, and the late celebrated Bryan Edwards, of Jamaica, deserve particular notice. Several important documents relating to this subject, written by intelligent Creoles, were likewise placed in the writer's hands; and he has frequently conversed with individuals who have visited or resided

## INTRODUCTION.

at the places which he has pointed out as being the most eligible for the cutting of canals, or the construction of roads, so as to give a rapid and certain communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, more especially at the Isthmus of Tehuantepec; of the practicability of accomplishing which, at that place, personal investigation has also convinced him.

As respects the general remarks on Mexico, and the situation, political and civil, of the people of Spanish America, he has endeavoured to divest himself of those prejudices which a citizen of the United States may be supposed to entertain in favour of a people struggling against oppression, and to state faithfully what came under his own personal observation, as well with regard to royalists as revolutionists.

It is now more than twenty-one years since he made his first visit to Spanish America; and, as far as it has been in his power to gather information, he has done so. If he could not obtain all that he desired, it arose from his having constantly to be upon his guard against the jealousies of the Spanish government, and from the difficulty of gaining access to the Spanish archives; but, nevertheless, he flatters himself the reader will find in the work now submitted to his inspection, some facts entitled to consideration, as well from their importance as for their novelty.

It will naturally be asked, how he gained admission into the Spanish territories in America, in contravention to the laws of the Indies? To this it is replied, that his first visit was to Caracas, in the year 1799, where he continued, in the prosecution of extensive mercantile engagements with the Spanish authorities, until the

year 1806. Those engagements were with the approbation of his Catholic Majesty, and consequently his residence in that country, during the time before mentioned, was under the royal sanction. The extraordinary manner in which his interests were sacrificed, and his personal rights outraged, by the bad faith and arbitrary conduct of the Spanish authorities in Caracas, will be found in a statement of his claims on the Spanish government, in the Appendix to these volumes, and to which he particularly refers such of his readers as may feel any curiosity to see the extent of the injuries he has suffered as a merchant, in his intercourse with the Spanish government. As respects his subsequent visits to the Spanish dominions, more especially to Mexico, he is perfectly aware that the government of Spain has said, and will continue to say, that such visits being contrary to her laws and her policy, she had a right to punish him for their infraction. She has, on several occasions during the last ten years, enforced those laws against foreigners, by imprisonment, and in some instances by death.

When the Spanish general Morillo captured Carthage, he seized all the British and other foreign merchants, threw them into dungeons, threatened to try them by a military tribunal, and would unquestionably have shot them, had it not been for the timely interference of the British admiral on the Jamaica station, who despatched a frigate to Carthage, with such communications from the British authorities at Jamaica, as at once settled the question, and compelled Morillo instantaneously to release all the British subjects. The American government likewise sent a vessel of war to

Carthagena, and obtained the liberation of several American citizens. If these measures had not been adopted, no mercy nor regard would have been extended to any foreigner who might unfortunately have fallen into the hands of the Spanish government; because not only by the "*Leyes de las Indias*" was it a capital crime for a foreigner to enter the Spanish dominions; without a special authority from his Catholic Majesty, but during the present revolutions in America, the Spanish government have issued various decrees, expressly declaring that all strangers aiding the insurgents, or found residing among them, were to be punished as insurgents, by death. If these decrees have not been executed by the Spanish government, it was by no means for lack of disposition, but from the apprehension of the resentment of those governments whose subjects and citizens held intercourse with the insurgents.

The writer has been thus particular in stating these facts, because they shew that any individual, not engaged in the military or naval service of the insurgents of Spanish America, is under the protection of the laws of nations in favour of all non-combatants; and that any attempt on the part of Spain to infringe this security is a violation of the usages of civilized nations, and a direct outrage against that nation whose subjects may have been thus wantonly punished. It is not only on these principles that the writer feels justified in complaining of the barbarous treatment he has received from the Spanish government, during an *imprisonment of two years and a half*, but because there are some peculiar circumstances attending the affair, which, if he is not greatly mistaken, will excite the indignation and surprise of every unprejudiced reader.



The recital of this case has become the more necessary, because, during his imprisonment in the dungeons of Mexico, he was honoured with the sympathy of his fellow-citizens, and the interference of his government in his behalf. He therefore deems it incumbent upon him to prove, that he was not undeserving of such sympathy and protection. In addition to this, he is anxious to remove all doubts with regard to his conduct, that may have arisen from the misrepresentations made in the public newspapers respecting him; for in some of these he has been called *Doctor Robinson*, and in others it has been asserted that he held a military command in the service of the Mexican insurgents, and was taken prisoner on the field of battle. The writer has not in any one instance violated his neutral obligations as a citizen of the United States. But, while making this assertion, he does not at all hesitate openly to avow, that if an ardent desire to promote the independence of all Spanish America, and more especially of Mexico, constitutes him an enemy of Spain, and criminal in her eyes,—then he is guilty. If the fact of his having visited New Grenada, Caracas, and Mexico, during the political commotions of those countries, for the purpose of ascertaining their actual condition, and of succouring the revolutionists, as a neutral merchant, by all fair and honourable means, renders him an enemy to Spain,—then is he her enemy. If cherishing those sentiments, and a determination to persevere in promoting the independence of South America and Mexico, by every means in his power, consistent with his duties as a citizen of the United States, proves him to entertain criminal intentions towards the Spanish government,—then indeed is he criminal.

Having thus acknowledged all that the government of Spain can possibly lay to his charge, he now invites the attention of the reader to the following detail of facts.

On the 4th of March, 1816, he embarked at New Orleans on board the United States' brig of war *Saranac*, commanded by John H. Elton, Esq. bound on a cruise in the Gulf of Mexico. When he applied for a passage, he stated to the naval commander on that station, Commodore Patterson, that he wished to be landed on the Mexican coast, for the purpose of having an interview with some of the Mexican authorities, on whom he had drafts for a large amount of money, due to certain merchants in the United States. His request was politely acceded to, and Captain Elton received directions accordingly. The author premises this, to shew that he did not depart from the United States in an unauthorized manner, or with an illegal object in view.

On the 4th of the ensuing month, he was landed from the *Saranac*, at *Boquilla de Piedra*, a post then in possession of the revolutionists, on the coast of Vera Cruz. He thence proceeded to the head-quarters of Don Guadalupe Victoria, commandant-general of the patriot forces in the province of Vera Cruz, who received him in the most friendly manner. Upon his explaining the object of his visit to Mexico, General Victoria observed, that although he was unable immediately to pay the drafts on the Mexican government, yet if the writer would remain a few weeks in the country, payment should be made. He was the more readily induced to wait, as he was desirous to view the interesting country in which he then was, and likewise to acquire

correct information respecting the political state of its affairs, in the expectation that it might be such as would justify his entering into some commercial arrangements; as well with the government as with individuals. But he soon discovered that the representations made to him at New Orleans by the Mexican minister, *Don José Manuel de Herrera*, and by *Don Alvarez Toledo*, were destitute of foundation, and indeed that in many points they had deceived him. However, as he received some flattering accounts of the situation of the patriots in the interior, and had a prospect of obtaining the payment of his drafts at a place called *Tehuacan*, he proceeded thither, and was received with every mark of civility by the patriot commandant, *Don José Manuel de Mier y Terán*, who accepted and paid part of the drafts, and promised to discharge the residue in a short time.

He remained at *Tehuacan* until the last of July, and was treated with the greatest hospitality and attention, as well by the general as by the respectable Créoles of the country. At this place he met with *Doctor John Hamilton Robinson*, who was then a brigadier-general in the service of the Mexican patriots, and who had long been a very obnoxious individual to the Spanish government; a circumstance to which the author in part owes his subsequent persecution by the Spanish authorities in Mexico.

The author communicated to General Terán his desire to return to the United States; but as the royalists had recently been successful in the province of Vera Cruz, and had impeded all communication between *Tehuacan* and the coast, it became impossible to return by the

way of Boquilla de Piedra, and as Teran was about to undertake an expedition against the port of *Guasacualco*, at the bottom of the Mexican Gulf, on the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, the writer resolved to avail himself of that opportunity to leave the country. The conduct of General Teran on that expedition, and the circumstances which caused its failure, will be found detailed in Chapter V. of this work.

A few days after Teran had left Tehuacan, on his enterprise against Guasacualco, the author followed with his servant, in company with a detachment of troops, who were escorting a sum of money. About sixty leagues from Tehuacan, we came up with Teran, who informed us, that he had met with no difficulties in his route; that the few troops which the enemy usually kept in that part of the country, had either fled or joined him; and that, as all the Indians were in his favour, he was confident of reaching Guasacualco in a few days. This information afforded satisfaction to the writer, because, although he was a non-combatant, he was aware that, in the event of a battle, no respect would be shewn by the royalists to any person who might fall into their hands.

On the morning of the 8th of September, Teran took possession of the village of *Playa Vicente*, situated on a branch of the river Tustepec, which the enemy had abandoned the day previous. The body of the patriot army, encamped on the bank of the river, opposite to the village; intending to cross it in the evening, on rafts to be constructed for the purpose. In the mean time, the general, unapprehensive of danger, passed over to the village, with about fifteen men. The writer

had accompanied him, and was regaling himself with eating pine-apples, in a garden at the extremity of the village, when a sudden discharge of musquetry aroused him from his feelings of security. He immediately beheld Teran and his little party defending themselves against a considerable body of the enemy. The conflict was short: Teran, with one or two of his men, escaped to the river, and swam across, amidst a shower of balls: the rest of the party were cut to pieces.

During this perilous affray, the writer effected his retreat to a small thicket, which afforded him security for the time. He here had ample leisure to reflect upon his situation, and the course which he should adopt to obtain ultimate safety. He conceived it possible that Teran would attack and re-capture the village, in which case he might again have an opportunity of pursuing his route to Guasacualco; and continued to flatter himself with this delusive hope for *five days*, when he became so exhausted by hunger that he could scarcely move. In this wretched condition, and on the point of perishing in the woods, he determined to deliver up his person to the royalists. Accordingly, on the evening of the 12th of September, he crawled from his place of concealment, reached the road to the village, and with great difficulty walked to the head-quarters of the royalists. Being almost covered with mud, and fainting under fatigue and hunger, his appearance and situation excited the surprise and sympathy of the Spanish officers, particularly of the commander, *Ortega*, who in a friendly manner took him by the hand, and inquired his name. As soon as it was mentioned, the officers exclaimed, "Thank God! (*gracias a Dios*) Doctor

in the first place, that as he had not borne arms against his Catholic Majesty, nor had done any act in violation of his neutral character as a citizen of the United States, having been among the insurgents as a foreigner and a non-combatant, he considered himself under the safeguard of the laws of nations, and exempt from being considered or treated as an enemy of his Catholic Majesty; and secondly, that he felt a repugnance to ask for the benefit of the royal indulto, because he should thereby tacitly acknowledge himself to be an insurgent. Ortega then said, with a great deal of heat, "Sir, you have been among the insurgents, and must be treated as one; therefore, I once more tender to you the clemency of my sovereign." Perceiving that remonstrance was vain, and that obstinacy in refusing the proffered offer would inevitably lead to the threatened vengeance, the writer was induced to avail himself of the benefit of the indulto. Immediately thereupon, Ortega shook him by the hand with great cordiality, and in the presence of his officers and soldiers extended to him the indulto of his Catholic Majesty. He was then permitted to walk about the village, and indeed no restraint was laid upon his person: he could therefore have easily escaped; but as he had pledged his honour not to violate the conditions of the indulto, presuming that it would be honourably fulfilled on the part of the Spanish government, he was morally withheld from thinking of such an attempt; in fact, it was not his wish to do so, particularly as he expected to be at liberty to proceed to Vera Cruz, and embark for the United States. On applying to the commander for permission to depart, he declared, that it was not in his power to grant it, until

he should hear from the commander-in-chief of the province of Oaxaca, to whom he would write on the subject.

On the 22d of the month, the answer came from Oaxaca; but, instead of the writer's request to be permitted to proceed to Vera Cruz being acceded to, Ortega was ordered to send him under a strong escort to the city of Oaxaca. This measure excited his surprise, and he immediately suspected that it was the intention of the government to withdraw from him the protection of the royal indulto. On the 23d, he proceeded on his route to Oaxaca, escorted by a body of cavalry. He was furnished with a good horse, and treated with every possible kindness, but both by day and night was closely watched.

In all the villages through which he passed, he received the most hospitable attentions from the inhabitants; but when they understood that he had delivered up his person on the faith of the royal indulto, and was still treated as a prisoner, they shook their heads, and appeared to anticipate his fate. Some of these generous Creoles offered, at the hazard of their lives, to assist him in making his escape; but, as he had not yet received any positive proof of the intentions of the government, he determined on his part faithfully to adhere to the conditions of the indulto.

On the evening of the 27th, he arrived at the city of Oaxaca, and was conducted to the government house, where he was presented to the commander-in-chief, Don Manuel Obesa, who received him with great kindness. He stated, that it was his intention to send the writer to the city of Mexico, where *his excellency the*

*viceroys would determine whether he was entitled to the benefit of the royal indulto, or not. On the writer's expressing his astonishment at such a breach of good faith, General Obesa observed, that it was sometimes expedient for the viceroy to withhold the benefit of the indultos that had been granted by his officers, but he hoped that in the present case it would be sacredly fulfilled. He added, that the writer must remain in Oaxaca until arrangements were made for conducting him to the city of Mexico; and that, in order to prevent his being insulted by the populace, a cell should be fitted up for his reception in the convent of St. Domingo, and a strong guard be stationed there for his protection. Having thanked him for such peculiar marks of his politeness, the writer was conducted to the convent, and placed in a cell which wore the appearance of a dungeon. A soldier was stationed at the door, and another at the window. The head of the convent was a worthy friar (Don Nicolas Medina), whose countenance indicated that he could cherish benevolent feelings even towards a heretic: his subsequent conduct, and that of all the friars of the institution, was marked with the most hospitable and generous attentions.*

On the 28th, the commander, his secretary, and the intendant of the province, visited the writer, for the purpose of interrogating him, and of taking his declaration as to the motives which had induced him to visit the country. To the latter point he candidly replied, by stating the facts as they have been previously narrated, but declined answering many of the interrogatories, particularly such as related to the situation and views of the insurgents. He considered many



of the questions as indelicate and ungenerous, more especially as he was deprived of the benefit of the royal indulto, and treated as a prisoner. The commander appeared sensible of the force of these objections, and did not press his inquiries further; but observed, that if the writer hoped to be restored to liberty, he must first give some proof of his no longer being a friend to the insurgents. After a few more remarks, tending to inspire him with confidence in the honour and clemency of the viceroy, the commander departed.

The next day, he was visited by nearly all the principal ecclesiastics of the city, who vied with the friar Medina in their friendly treatment of him, offering him money, apparel, and every thing to make his situation as comfortable as possible. The principal inhabitants of Oaxaca also honoured him with their visits; and indeed all classes of society appeared to take an interest in his situation, expressing their regret that he was not at liberty. It soon became manifest, that the commander's precautions to prevent the writer from receiving insult were entirely superfluous, and that they were probably intended to hinder the populace from giving him more solid evidences of their regard and sympathy than mere expressions of condolence.

Having been refused permission to breathe the fresh air of the convent garden, the writer became more urgent to be sent to Mexico, that he might not any longer be kept in suspense as to his fate. At length, after having been confined in the convent fourteen weeks, an order was received from the viceroy, to send him under a strong guard to the capital. Accordingly, he left Oaxaca, under an escort of sixty infantry and

about seventy cavalry; but, after proceeding a four days' journey on the route to the city, a courier from the viceroy brought orders to conduct him back to Oaxaca, and thence to Vera Cruz. Although he was disappointed in thus being debarred an interview with the viceroy in the Mexican capital, yet he was cheered with the hope, that on his arrival at Vera Cruz he should be permitted to depart for the United States.

On returning to the city of Oaxaca, he was placed in his old quarters in the convent; and, after the lapse of a few days, was sent, under the orders of a Spanish officer and a body of cavalry, to Vera Cruz, where he arrived on the 3d of February, 1817. On being presented to the governor, *Don José Davila*, he expressed great regret that he had instructions to *confine the writer in the fortress of San Juan de Ulua*, until further orders should be received from the viceroy. It was in vain to remonstrate against this cruel order; but, nevertheless, he expressed his indignation at the perfidious conduct of the viceroy in such strong terms, that Governor Davila and his officers looked at him with surprise, and asked him how he dared to speak so disrespectfully of so exalted a personage as the viceroy of New Spain. After making a reply which incensed them still more, he was ordered to proceed to the fortress, and there behave with proper humility, otherwise they would take measures to punish him for his presumption. The officer who conducted him to the castle, gave him a description of the barbarous character of the officer in command of the fortress, *Echaragari*, and cautioned him to beware of provoking his ire by repeating such expressions as he had used to Governor Davila. The moment the writer

beheld the countenance of this officer, he needed no other evidence of the ferocious soul that beamed in its every line. The adjutant of the castle was ordered to conduct him to his allotted apartment, which was a small room, or state dungeon, under one of the arches of the ramparts.

Were the writer to give a detail of his sufferings during a confinement of eleven months in that dreadful Bastile, it would be deemed incredible by his readers, unless any of them should have had the misfortune to have experienced incarceration among the Spaniards. Even in its mildest shape, it is worse than in any other civilized nation; but when we speak of the castles of San Juan de Ulua, and of Omoa, it must be understood, that there are not to be found such mansions of horror in any other part of the world. They have not only been the sepulchres of thousands, but in their horrid dungeons cruelties have been practised as dreadful as the most heart-rending scenes of the secret caverns of the Inquisition.

Had not the writer been blessed with an iron constitution, and a flow of spirits difficult to be subdued, and had he not received some benevolent succours from Don Lorenzo Murphy, of Vera Cruz, he must inevitably have perished. During an illness of several weeks, with a violent hemorrhage which daily threatened to terminate his existence, he besought his savage gaoler for medical aid, and for permission to be removed to the hospital; he met with a refusal. But he forbears to dwell on this painful subject, the thoughts of which fill him with such horror and conflicting emotions, that his perturbed mind cannot sufficiently collect itself

to describe it. From the sufferings of the prisoners belonging to Mina's expedition, who were confined in this infernal prison, which will be found related in the following pages, he must leave the reader to form some idea of the trials through which he had to pass.

The only consolation he experienced during his protracted imprisonment, was in a visit from Lieutenant Porter, commander of the United States' brig Boxer. Arriving at Vera Cruz, in September, 1817, this officer obtained the permission of the governor to visit the writer; but so fearful were they that he might discover the miserable situation of every thing that surrounded their prisoner, that they would not permit Lieutenant Porter to enter the castle, but detained him at the landing place, whither the writer was conducted, under a guard, to the interview. It is not easy to describe his emotions, on seeing one of his own countrymen, on shaking him by the hand, and hearing from him that he had official instructions to request the Spanish authorities to release him. He then felt that he was not wholly abandoned by his country, and hoped soon to escape from the fangs of despotism. As an interpreter and other persons had been sent by the governor to be present at the interview, the conversation with Lieutenant Porter was necessarily brief and cautious. The writer, however, freely expressed his indignation at the base and cruel treatment he had experienced; and requested the lieutenant, that if he did not succeed in obtaining his liberation, to demand that the Spanish authorities should at least explain their motives for thus immuring within a dungeon a citizen of the United

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States, without a hearing or a trial. Lieutenant Porter endeavoured to console him, by assurances of a speedy release, and by promising to repeat his visit. He also furnished him with some wine, bread, and fowls, which indeed were luxuries to one who for several months had been fed on a scanty allowance of musty beans and rice.

On the termination of the interview, he was re-conducted to his miserable apartment, and there was left to indulge in those reflections that beguile the hours of the captive when a ray of hope unexpectedly breaks in upon him. For many weeks previous to the arrival of Lieutenant Porter, the writer had found his health and spirits rapidly declining; and although he had endeavoured to repel the approach of despair, yet it is highly probable that that demon would have seized him, had not the prospect of deliverance at length appeared to re-animate his spirits. He not only became cheerful, but the gloomy walls within which he was enclosed were no longer viewed with horror; the voice of the surly sentinels no longer grated on his ears; and so far did he indulge in visionary hopes and calculations, that he almost ceased to remember that he was still a prisoner in the castle of San Juan de Ulua.

These illusions were soon dispelled. The visit of Lieutenant Porter was not repeated; and, after expecting him for twelve days, the writer was informed that he had sailed, after having been refused permission to repeat his visit. It was likewise communicated to him, that the application of Lieutenant Porter for his release had proved ineffectual, the governor having answered, that he must consult the viceroy before such a step could be

taken; and as it was uncertain when instructions would be received from the capital, the lieutenant concluded that it was most proper to return to the United States, to receive further instructions on the subject.

The effects of this interposition of his government, although his immediate liberation did not follow, were of high importance to the writer, not only in respect to the restoration of his health and spirits, but to the alteration of the conduct of the Spanish authorities. He became more firm and indignant in his representations to the governor of Vera Cruz and to the viceroy, the latter of whom at length resolved on sending him to Spain, to receive the decision of the king upon his case. When this information was communicated to him, about the last of December, 1817, it caused him almost as much joy as if his actual release had been announced; for he had a presentiment, that if he could but get out of the castle of San Juan de Ulua, he should ultimately be freed from the clutches of Spain. So strong were his hopes in this point, that he did not permit a certain document which had been confidentially placed in his hands, to cause him any uneasiness. This curious paper is now in his possession, and is in substance as follows:—

“ (SECRET AND CONFIDENTIAL.)

“ *Mexico, May 21, 1817.*

“ *The viceroy has avowed his intention not to grant Mr. Robinson the benefit of the royal indulto, but to send him to Spain; recommending to the authorities there his close confinement for life, because he has attained such a knowledge of the actual state of the insurrection in this country, and of the real dispositions*

*of the Mexican subjects, that it would be highly dangerous to his Catholic Majesty's interest ever to give the said Robinson an opportunity to publish such information abroad. This communication is made to Mr. R. for the purpose of apprizing him of the viceroy's determination."*

To the generous individual who at the hazard of his life made the above communication, the writer tenders his most grateful acknowledgments; and if his name be not now disclosed, the reasons for concealing it are obvious: but the period perhaps is not far distant, when the writer will be enabled with pride and pleasure to publish the name, without implicating the personal safety of him who bears it. The reader will find, in the sequel, that the recommendation of the viceroy was honoured with due attention by the king of Spain.

Early in January, 1818, the writer was embarked at Vera Cruz, on board his Catholic Majesty's frigate Iphigenia, destined for Spain. The commander of the ship did him the favour to separate him from the rest of the unfortunate prisoners on board, and allotted to him a place in the gun-room with the officers. He was likewise furnished with food from the commander's table, and allowed to walk on the quarter-deck. For these attentions he shall ever feel grateful, as they emanated solely from principles of humanity.

A few days after sailing from Vera Cruz, they encountered violent gales of wind; the frigate sprung a leak, and was compelled to bear away for Campeachy. So serious was the leak, that time was scarcely afforded to land the crew, and about two millions of dollars, be-

fore the vessel sunk at her anchorage. The writer was conducted to tolerably comfortable quarters, and placed under a strong guard. He was there confined for *five months*: but, as the pleasures and miseries of life are frequently augmented or diminished by our own comparisons, he consoled himself with contrasting his imprisonment at Campeachy with his sufferings at Vera Cruz; and, with the aid of this reflection, passed the time cheerfully and in good health. The hospitable attentions he received from several distinguished inhabitants of Campeachy will never be forgotten, and he shall feel the highest satisfaction, should it ever be in his power to give them proofs of his gratitude.

From Campeachy he was taken to Havana, in the Spanish sloop of war *San Francisco*. On his arrival there, he was conducted to the common gaol, but was soon removed to the Moro castle, and placed in the most secure dungeon (*calaboso*) in the fortress. It was however spacious, and far superior to his quarters at San Juan de Ulua. The commander had very strict orders from the captain-general respecting him, and was made responsible for the security of his person. He rigidly executed his orders, but his conduct generally was kind, and his amiable family honoured the writer with the most friendly attentions. The American citizens residing at Havana also treated him in the most generous manner, and, by furnishing him with the means of living comfortably, caused him to become a favourite with the officers on duty at the fortress, who generally made his dungeon their head-quarters. He remained in the Moro castle for nearly *six months*, making occasional remonstrances to the captain-general.



in a tone that displeased his excellency, at the same time that they convinced him of the injustice of his government; and, in an interview with which the writer was honoured, at the castle, in December, 1818, he succeeded in obtaining permission to breathe the fresh air on the ramparts.

On the 13th of January, 1819, he was again embarked on board the Spanish brig of war *Ligero*, commanded by *Don Juan José Martínez*, destined for Cadiz. This worthy officer performed towards him, during the passage, every duty of generosity and humanity. He was frequently invited to the captain's table, treated in the most friendly manner, and was so fortunate as to gain his esteem. On their arrival at Cadiz, on the 21st of February, he was represented by that worthy man in so favourable a light to General O'Donnell, the governor of that city, that when orders were sent on board the vessel for the removal on shore of the prisoners, of whom there were several beside himself, the writer was excepted; the adjutant of the governor informing him that he was at liberty to proceed to whatever quarter of the city he thought proper. This was cheering intelligence, inducing him to believe that his persecutions had reached their termination.

Accordingly, on the morning of the 22d, he landed, and proceeded to the house of Mr. Tunis, the American consul, who shewed much satisfaction and surprise at his being at liberty. He went to a hotel, and passed the evening in reflecting on this unexpected good fortune. He had not the least suspicion of the reverse that was about to take place; for, had he not felt assured of perfect security from further molestation, he

would undoubtedly have effected a precipitate departure; but, confiding in his innocence, and flattering himself that he should have an opportunity of obtaining redress at Madrid for his recent sufferings, he anticipated no ill.

He retired early to rest, but was roused from sleep, about eleven o'clock at night, by a loud knocking at his door; and, on opening it, he was requested by a Spanish officer to dress himself speedily, and accompany him. He was then conducted to a guard-house, where he was left to himself the remainder of the night, to ponder on the sudden alteration in the aspect of his affairs. The next day, he was taken to the castle of San Sebastian, and given in charge to the commandant.

This sudden change in the conduct of the governor was thus explained. It appeared, that he had forgotten a certain royal order, bearing date the 15th of October, 1818, which commanded him, immediately on the arrival of the writer at Cadiz, *to send him to Ceuta, there to be confined in the citadel, without communication with any of the other prisoners in that fortress.* But the governor's secretary, or some other of the persons employed about him, reminded him of the order, which occasioned the renewed imprisonment of the writer.

To be sent to Ceuta, and there confined in the citadel, without a hearing, convinced him that his Catholic Majesty was determined to conform to the advice of the viceroy of New Spain. He had written, on the day of his arrival at Cadiz, to the minister of the United States at Madrid, requesting his interference and protection; and, as he was uncertain what would be the result of this application, his first object was to endeavour to pre-

vent his removal to Ceuta, until he should hear from Madrid; for he was sensible, that if he once reached the former place, his liberation from it would be very doubtful. He therefore requested the American consul to interpose his good offices, to acquaint the governor that the American minister had instructions from his government to demand the release of the writer, and to suggest to him the propriety of not removing him from Cadiz until his Catholic Majesty's pleasure should be known. The governor politely listened to these representations; and the writer's apprehensions of being precipitately hurried off to Ceuta, were thus allayed.

On the 25th of February, he addressed a letter to General O'Donnel, complaining in strong terms of the government of Spain, and begging that he would grant him the liberty of the city on his parole of honour, until intelligence should arrive from Madrid of the result of the American minister's application in his behalf. On the 28th, he was conducted to the government house to have an interview with the general, who received him with great affability. His secretaries and clerks having withdrawn, the general entered into a frank conversation with him, relative to the affairs of Mexico, as well as to his own peculiar situation. The countenance and manners of General O'Donnel inspired him with confidence; and he was so fortunate as to create in the general a lively impression in his favour. After a short conversation, General O'Donnel called in his adjutant, and ordered him to accompany the writer to the castle of San Sebastian, with directions to the commander to permit him to leave it whenever he thought proper, and to reside in the city on his parole, until his Catholic Majesty should otherwise determine.

On the 4th of March, the writer received from the American minister the following letter:—

Madrid, February 27, 1819.

“SIR,

“Your letter of 21st instant, which should have reached me on the 25th, was not delivered till the 26th. I have this day written to the first minister of state (Marquis of Casa Yrujo), demanding, in pursuance of the orders of my government, long since received, your immediate release.

“I have sent to that minister the statement of your case, contained in your letter of June 4th, 1817, to the secretary of state of the United States, and have added in my note to the minister such other circumstances, drawn from your letter to me, as I thought might be useful. I have called to the recollection of the marquis his correspondence with the intendant of Venezuela, the better to distinguish you from Doctor John Hamilton Robinson; adding my personal knowledge of you, in London, in the character of a merchant, in the year 1801, occupied, if I mistake not, in the affairs of your tobacco contract. At the suggestion of your friend Mr. Meade, I have also referred to Mr. Cagigal, formerly captain-general of Venezuela, and now resident at Santa Maria, near Cadiz, for information relating to your operations in that province during his administration, &c. &c.

“Upon the whole, I hope that this representation may be attended with success; but, whatever may result from it, you shall be immediately informed.

“With much esteem, Sir,

“I am your obedient servant,

“GEORGE W. ERVING.

“Mr. William D. Robinson.”

The receipt of Mr. Erving's letter inspired the writer with that confidence which a citizen of his country must ever feel, when he finds himself under the protection of his government. But, on the evening of the 14th of March, an important circumstance occurred, which worked a total revolution in his affairs, and produced a corresponding change in his course of conduct. He was confidentially informed, that the governor of Cadiz had received, by a courier which arrived from Madrid that evening, *a severe reprimand for having granted him the liberty of the city of Cadiz, and was directed immediately to secure his person, place him in the castle of San Sebastian, and thence send him in a vessel of war to Ceuta, to be confined in the citadel, conformably to his Catholic Majesty's order of the 15th of October, 1818.* As the source whence this information was derived left no doubt of its correctness, the writer knew that if he did not take some precautionary steps, he should be arrested in a few hours. The emergency called for promptness of decision. He reflected, on the one hand, that he was bound by the laws of honour not to violate the parole which he had given to General O'Donnell; but, on the other, he considered that the Spanish government was about to make him a victim of its perfidy and injustice. He knew that the issuing of an order for his imprisonment at Ceuta, after the American minister had made a formal application for his release, was an unequivocal proof of a deliberate intention to sacrifice him, by confinement in a place where he should even be deprived of the means of making a remonstrance, and whence he could never expect to be freed, unless his government should adopt measures of the strongest

kind; and that, until such measures were adopted, he should be exposed to all the severities and dangers of Spanish incarceration. The horrors he had experienced in the castle of San Juan de Ulua were still fresh in his memory.

Under all these circumstances, he determined on making an attempt to effect his escape; but, as the gates of the city were then closed, it was necessary to wait until the next morning. He departed from his lodgings about eight o'clock at night; and, in about an hour afterwards, the adjutant of the governor was sent to arrest him, but on finding him absent, left a polite message, that General O'Donnel wished to see him. The following morning, he received information that a general search was making for him, and that it would be difficult to elude the vigilance of the guards posted at the gates. But these unpropitious circumstances did not deter him from his resolution, for a miscarriage could add but little to his misfortunes.

It would perhaps be improper here to describe the mode of his escape, lest some of his friends or acquaintances might fall under the suspicion of being accessory to it. He deems it necessary, however, to remark, that although several individuals in Cadiz knew of his intentions to escape, yet he did not implicate any one of them in the act.

On the afternoon of the 15th of March, he succeeded in passing the gates of the city; and the same evening, was outside of the harbour, on board of a vessel bearing the flag of his country. On the 19th, he reached Gibraltar, where he was received with every mark of friendship and hospitality, by Bernard Henry, Esq.

American consul, Richard M'Call, navy agent of the United States, Horatio Sprague, Richard Gatewood, Hill and Blodget, and by several other gentlemen; to all of whom he begs leave to offer his sincere acknowledgments.

A few days after his arrival at Gibraltar, a demand for his person was made by the Spanish government upon the governor of that fortress. It is almost needless to say, that such a demand was looked upon as an absurdity.

No longer under any apprehensions of falling again into the power of the Spaniards, and reflecting on the misrepresentations that would probably be made respecting his conduct, and being desirous of manifesting to the Spanish government, as well as to his own, that although his departure from Cadiz was perfectly justifiable, yet he was still willing to submit to a fair and impartial investigation of his conduct, provided that a guarantee were given that he should not suffer any new personal outrages, he addressed the following letter:—

“ Gibraltar, March 25, 1819.

“ SIR,

“ For your excellency's information, I beg leave to enclose copies of my letters to the Condé de Abisbal, governor of Cadiz, and to the Marquis Casa Yrujo, first minister of state.

“ I beg your excellency will pursue such measures as in your judgment may be necessary, under existing circumstances, as well to sustain my honour as interests.

“ I shall be entirely guided by, and hope to be honoured with, your advice; and have only to observe,

that if there should arise the least demur on the part of the Spanish government to give a formal and solemn assurance, that neither my person nor rights shall be subject to further outrages, I mean in such case to make my arrangements for an early departure for the United States. I am without any of your excellency's communications since your letter of the 12th instant.

" I remain, respectfully, your obedient Servant,

" WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

" To his Excellency George W. Erving,

Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at Madrid."

Under the same date, he wrote a letter to the *Condé de Abisbal*, of which the following are extracts :—

" SIR,

" I am well aware that your excellency may reproach me, for having violated my word of honour, in having left Cadiz without your consent; but I beg leave to state the following circumstances, which, I flatter myself, will be a complete justification of that step, and shew at the same time that it became imperiously necessary for me to adopt it.

" In the first place, my advices from Madrid, of the 9th instant, informed me that no answer had been given by the Marquis Casa Yrujo to the demand for my release made by the minister of the United States at Madrid, on the 26th ult. A silence of twelve days, on such a point, not only appeared to me to be at variance with the principles of national courtesy, but very clearly indicated an indisposition on the part of the marquis or his government to comply with the demand in question.



“ Secondly—I had indubitable information that there existed, in your excellency’s possession, *an order of his Catholic Majesty, dated October 15, 1818, directing, that on my arrival at Cadiz, I was to be sent to Ceuta, and there rigorously confined in the citadel.* When I reflected that the Chevalier Onis, minister plenipotentiary of Spain in the United States, had given to my government a solemn promise, that on my arrival in Spain I should enjoy a liberal and impartial hearing, at Madrid, against any charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have adduced against me, and that, instead of such promise being honourably fulfilled, his Catholic Majesty had issued so unjust and recent an order as the one before mentioned, it was obvious to my mind that the Spanish government had a premeditated intention to sacrifice me.

“ Thirdly—On the 14th instant, at night, I obtained the most unequivocal information, that your excellency had received certain *secret orders from Madrid, again to arrest me, and to place me in security in the castle of San Sebastian, until an opportunity offered to send me to Ceuta.*

“ Fourthly—On the night of the 14th, and on the morning of the 15th, I discovered that your excellency had adopted very active steps to get possession of my person, doubtless for the purpose of carrying into effect your orders from Madrid.

“ The preceding four points embrace matters of a very delicate nature, and shew the imperious necessity of the course I have adopted. \* \* \* \* \*

“ Thirty months’ imprisonment, in castles, gaols, dungeons, and convents, without a hearing, or even the

shadow of a legal trial, had taught me a bitter and serious lesson, and authorized me to suppose that the dungeons of Ceuta might close my mortal career.

"We know that the sultans of the Ottoman empire, in the plenitude of their sublime functions, occasionally decapitate their vassals, and afterwards order the divan of Constantinople to examine and decide on the guilt or innocence of the victim. God forbid, that Turkish usages should become the *order of the day* in any part of the Christian world! but I presume your excellency will coincide with me in opinion, that there is no essential difference between imprisoning an individual for an indefinite period, without a hearing or trial, and taking off his head according to the usages of the Turks.

"I trust your excellency will find in the preceding reflections an ample apology, if not a justification, of the step which I have taken. I shall always bear a grateful recollection of your excellency's very liberal conduct towards me at Cadiz; and I flatter myself, that neither your conscience nor reputation will ever suffer, from your having manifested a repugnance to be the subordinate instrument of executing decrees, unjust and barbarous, and marked by a spirit of anti-civilization in all their features.

"I beg leave to enclose a copy of my letter of this date to the Marquis Casa Yrujo, for your information, and have the honour to be, with great respect,

"Your excellency's obedient servant,

"WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

"To his Excellency the Condé de Abisbal,

Captain-general of Andalusia, Governor of Cadiz, &c. &c.

## INTRODUCTION,

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" Gibraltar, March 25, 1810:

" SIR,

" It has been represented to me, that your excellency, in your public and private character, has developed a strong antipathy towards the government and citizens of the United States; but when I reflect on your excellency's distinguished talents and acquirements, on the long course of your diplomatic career, and on your having mixed so much in the civilized world, I can scarcely think it possible, that the imputation before suggested is correct. It will afford me much pleasure to find it unjust.

" I have now the honour to enclose, for your excellency's information, a copy of my letter to the governor of Cadiz, in justification of my having departed from that city without his consent. I have sent a copy of the same to the American minister, and shall send another to the government of the United States.

" I feel most particularly anxious, sir, to be allowed a public opportunity to vindicate my conduct and character against any charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have unjustly and illiberally adduced against me; and I wish to have an opportunity of proving how very often the viceroys, captain-generals, and other authorities in Spanish America, make Olympian mountains out of mole-hills.

" I am desirous, sir, of convincing the Spanish government, as well as my own, that I have been most unjustly persecuted and cruelly treated; and I likewise desire to prove, that I have rendered most important services to your government, which terminated in my ruin, in the years 1804 and 1805, and that I have now

the most indisputable claims on your government for *more than half a million of dollars*. To attain those objects, it is only necessary for me to have a liberal and impartial hearing.

“ If I have committed any errors, I will submit to make a corresponding atonement. I do not supplicate favours or indulgences. I demand a rigid scrutiny into my conduct; but I must require such scrutiny to be made with a due regard to my person and rights, as a citizen of the United States.

“ Under these circumstances, sir, I solicit his Catholic Majesty to grant me a fair and liberal hearing; and that he will condescend to give a solemn assurance to the minister of the United States at Madrid, that I shall not suffer any further acts of personal violence or outrage on the part of the Spanish government.

“ If such assurance is given, with the solemnity suggested, I will not hesitate a moment in returning to Spain; but if, from any motives whatsoever, such assurance is withheld, I will in such case enter my solemn protest against all whom it may concern, and indulge hopes of obtaining eventual redress through the intervention of my own government.

“ I have the honour to be, with due respect,

“ Your excellency's obedient humble servant,

“ WILLIAM D. ROBINSON.

“ To his Excellency the Marquis Casa Yrujo,  
First Minister of State, &c. &c.”

The Spanish minister, immediately on the receipt of the preceding communications, addressed the following note to the American minister:—

## INTRODUCTION.

xlvii

(TRANSLATION.)

" SIR,

" I have the honour to send you herewith copies of a letter to me, and of one to the captain-general of Andalusia, written from Gibraltar, by William Davis Robinson, a citizen of the United States. By them your excellency will perceive, that, violating his parole of honour, he has fled from Cadiz, in which place he had been permitted to reside under arrest. Your excellency will likewise perceive the motives which he alleges, for having taken this determination, which he pretends to justify; and that he asks permission to come to this court, to defend himself against the charges which the viceroy of New Spain may have adduced against him; but, for the security of his person, solicits that there shall be given to your excellency the most complete assurances, that he shall not suffer any oppression or violence whatsoever. His Majesty, whom I have acquainted with these circumstances, and who desires to administer strict and impartial justice in his dominions, has been pleased to decide on granting a safe-conduct (*salvo conducto*) to the said citizen, to enable him, as he offers, to come to this capital, to justify himself before a competent tribunal, who will investigate and judge his conduct conformably to our laws, administered with all justice and impartiality,—*but on the indispensable condition, that the said Mr. Robinson is to remain subject to the effects of the sentence.* His Majesty hopes, that in this step will be immediately recognized the rectitude which characterizes his government, and that the president of the United States, as well as your excellency, will see in this measure a new proof of the

consideration with which the citizens of the United States are treated in Spain.

" I renew to your excellency my respects, and pray God to preserve your life many years.

" At the Palace, 2d of April, 1819.

(Signed) " MARQUIS DE CASA YRUJO.

" To the Minister Plenipotentiary  
of the United States of America."

The preceding document, although couched in very polite diplomatic language, was by no means satisfactory to the American minister. He naturally felt some degree of mortification at the inattention which had so recently been manifested by the Spanish government to the formal application he had made for the writer's release; and when he reflected, that, at the very moment the Marquis Casa Yrujo had been amusing him with a promise that the writer's case should be investigated, the said marquis had sent a secret order to the governor of Cadiz, to arrest and send him to Ceuta, it was impossible for the American minister to place any confidence in a government that acted with so much bad faith: he therefore declined accepting the guarantee for the writer's personal safety, offered in the marquis's note, and replied accordingly.

From the tenor of Mr. Erving's communications to the writer on this subject, he was perfectly satisfied of the correctness of the course Mr. Erving had adopted, and indeed he feels great pleasure in acknowledging his obligations to that gentleman, for his official and friendly conduct towards him. His last letter on the subject is as follows:—

## INTRODUCTION.

xlii

" Madrid, April 19, 1819:

" SIR,

" Your letter of April 12th is just received. I am glad to learn that the explanation contained in my last letter was satisfactory to you; as in no view of the case could I find a motive for encouraging your coming to Spain, neither could I make myself the medium of offering you the encouragement proposed by this government. As you desire to have a copy of Mr. Yrujo's note, referred to in my last, it is herewith enclosed. I must, however, observe, that if I could think it proper to intervene in the proposed arrangement, I should require stipulations rather more precise than what are contained in Mr. Yrujo's note.

" With much esteem, I am, sir,

" Your obedient servant,

(Signed)

" GEORGE W. ERVING.

" P.S. I must further inform you, that Mr. Yrujo, in his second note on your case, after mentioning *the importance of the charges against you*, says, that his Majesty would order his minister at Washington to lay before the president *his reasons for not acquiescing in the president's demand*. This, you will conclude, *was intended to preclude all further remonstrance on my part, whilst you were in prison under trial, or after sentence had been passed on you.* G. W. E.

" To Mr. William Davis Robinson."

The writer has been more prolix in this detail than he otherwise would have been, because the Spanish government has complained to the government of the United States on the point of his having broken his

parole at Cadiz, and because he feels desirous of convincing his fellow-citizens, as well as every impartial reader; that such a step was perfectly justifiable; and, as regards his refusal to return to Spain, he would fain believe that his correspondence with the minister of the United States completely elucidates that point, and shews that it would have been an act of more than common folly, to have visited Madrid under the guarantee and on the conditions expressed in the Marquis Casa Yrujo's note to Mr. Erving. But, exclusive of the official communications with which he was honoured in this matter, he has other documents in his possession, which prove, that, in case of his return to Spain, it was the marquis's intention, as well as that of his government, to have spared no means to effect his destruction. The writer forbears to publish the documents alluded to, at this time, as they would swell the present work too much, and perhaps trespass on the patience of the reader. Enough has already been said to shew, that if any of his opinions, expressed in the following pages, be tinged with enmity towards the late government of Spain, he has had sufficient cause to excite his animosity and disgust. He does not hesitate to declare, that while he respects the individual character of the Spaniard in Europe, yet he views with abhorrence his conduct towards the American Creole and Indian, and feels not the least commiseration for his loss of power and influence in the New World; and, if he mistake not, the facts developed in the course of this work will demonstrate, that the sun of Spanish power in the west is about to descend for ever below the horizon.

The writer is aware, that he who records events of



such deep importance to the civilized world, ought to be gifted with talents, and possess acquirements, infinitely beyond those which have fallen to his lot, and that consequently he may be accused of presumption in touching on subjects which even sages and scholars would find it difficult properly to illustrate: but, in extenuation of all his literary faults, he begs the reader to bear in mind, that an individual, compelled by misfortune and Spanish treachery to seek a subsistence for the last fourteen years by his own enterprise, cannot have enjoyed much time for the cultivation of letters. Making, therefore, no pretensions to the honours of *an author*, he submits his work to the candid criticism of his fellow-citizens. He can regard with frigid indifference the harshest judgments of European censors; but, tremblingly alive to the favourable opinion of his own countrymen, he requests them to look upon the work as the production of one who, never possessing learned leisure, was engaged in the honourable occupation of an American merchant.

PHILADELPHIA,  
October 20, 1820.



# MEMOIRS OF THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION.

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## CHAPTER I.

*Summary account of the Conquest—Humane enactments of Charles V.—Grievances of the Americans—Loyalty displayed by them, on receipt of the intelligence of the difficulties in Spain, in 1808—Politie course of conduct proposed to be adopted, in this emergency, by the Viceroy Iturrigaray—His deposition by a faction of Europeans—Arrival of his successor, Venegas—Plot entered into to overthrow the Spanish government in Mexico—Breaking out of the Revolution, at the town of Dolores, under the direction of Hidalgo—Capture of the city of Guanajuato—Proclamations of the Viceroy, and fulminations of the Church—Action at Las Cruces—Conduct of Hidalgo—Battle of Aculco—Massacre at Guanajuato, by Calleja—Battle of the Bridge of Calderon—Capture of Hidalgo—Death of that patriot, and of many other officers.*

**TO** elucidate the causes which gave birth to the present struggles of Spanish America generally, but particularly of that section of which we now treat, against the despotism of old Spain, it

is necessary to take a retrospect of its situation from the period of the conquest. It will then appear evident to every impartial mind, that almost each revolving hour, for the last three centuries, has been marked by a steady, systematic course of injustice and outrage towards the unfortunate Americans.

The conquest of Mexico was undertaken by Cortez, in conformity with a plan which had been prescribed to Columbus by the Spanish crown; by which it was provided, that the expense attending the discovery and conquest of any unknown countries should be altogether borne by the adventurers, who should, as a compensation, retain the vassalage of the nations, upon the condition of instructing them in the precepts of the Christian religion. The dominion of all such countries as should be discovered was to be vested in the crown of Spain, which, on its part, guaranteed (*Leyes de las Indias, Ley I. tit. 1. lib. 3.*) that "on no account should they be separated, wholly or in part, from that monarchy;" and the Emperor Charles V. bound himself and his successors for ever, that "these settlements should on no account, or in favour of any one, either wholly or in part, be separated;" and that "if, in violation of this stipulation, any of his successors

should make any gift or alienation, either wholly or in part, the same should be void.

Cortez, in pursuance of these favourable enactments, proceeded from the island of Cuba, on the 10th of February, 1519, to the work of conquest. After sailing along, and making descents on the coast of Yucatan, he landed, on the 21st of April, on the spot where the castle of San Juan de Ulua now stands; and, after experiencing several vicissitudes of fortune, and displaying the courage and ferocity of the Spaniards of those times, he succeeded, on the 8th of November, in planting the Spanish banners on the capital of the Mexican empire.

The chief of that empire lavished upon Cortez every mark of respect and hospitality; but was soon made to feel the effects of Spanish artifice and treachery. Montezuma was entrapped, and kept a prisoner by Cortez for six months. At length he was shot by an arrow, while endeavouring to quell a tumult among his own subjects. They were anxious to avenge his wrongs, and to revenge the treacherous massacre of their nobles on the 13th of May, 1520. This unfeeling outrage was committed by Alvarado, who had been left in the command of the city during the absence of Cortez, when the latter was marching upon Zempoalla, to

attack his rival Narvaez. Montezuma died, frantic with mortification and despair, about the 30th of June, in the quarters of the Spaniards, where he had been kept prisoner by Cortez. This event so much excited the rage of the Mexicans, that Cortez found it impossible to maintain his position in the city; and it became expedient for him to abandon it, and to fall back on his allies the Tlascalans. This movement was accomplished on the night of the 1st of July, but with severe loss. The friendship of the Tlascalans remained unaltered by the change of Cortez's fortune; and they offered him every assistance he should require, to enable him to continue his operations against their enemies, the Mexicans. Cortez, having incorporated with his Europeans the soldiers of the conquered Narvaez, and reinforcements from the Antilles, returned to and entered Tezcucó, the 31st of December. On the 31st of May, 1521, he laid siege to the city of Mexico, with eighty-seven cavalry, eight hundred and forty-eight Spanish infantry, eighteen pieces of artillery, *seventy-five thousand Tlascalans*, and thirteen small vessels, which he had built on the lake.

The Mexicans, under Quauhtemotzin, the successor of the unfortunate Montezuma, defended themselves with desperate valour; but,

after a resistance of seventy-five days, during which time they had to contend against the ravages of famine and disease, and an enemy who had increased in force to upwards of two hundred thousand men, Mexico was taken by Cortez on the 13th of August, though not until the greater part of that beautiful city had been destroyed.

The emperor, endeavouring to escape, in a canoe, from the fury of the Spaniards, was taken prisoner. The sanguinary Cortez crowned the dreadful cruelties which had sullied all the steps of his conquest, by torturing the emperor in a manner the most diabolical. With a view of extorting from the unfortunate monarch a confession of the place where his treasures were concealed, his feet were first soaked in oil, and afterwards burnt by a slow fire. Cortez, finding that the torture was borne with firmness by the noble Mexican, ordered him to be released; but he, together with two other kings, were hung, three years afterwards, on the allegation of an intent to revolt.

The natives of the country continued, for some time, to withstand the progress of the conqueror, but eventually fell victims to their inferiority in arms. A devastation ensued, by fire and sword, that has no parallel in history.

The unoffending aborigines were slaughtered without mercy or distinction. To the Spanish historians of those days we refer the reader, who feels desirous of perusing the accounts of those cruelties in detail: he will there find portrayed only a part of the bloody scenes,—yet sufficient to cover the Spanish name with eternal opprobrium.

After Cortez felt himself firmly established in the empire, the iron reign of tyranny commenced, in all its bitter and dreadful forms;—the Indians perished by thousands, under the scourge of their barbarous and cruel taskmasters.

The remonstrances of many prelates, but particularly of the beneficent and venerable *Las Casas*, against such horrors and anti-christian barbarities, at length awakened the attention of the emperor Charles V. To check the violence of the settlers, and to meliorate the condition of the natives, he instituted the famous tribunal of the Indies, and appointed officers specially for the purpose of acting as a check on the conduct of the settlers. But these protectors and judges speedily rendered nugatory all the humane institutions of the emperor. As no complaints could reach the ear of the monarch but through them, they soon closed all the



avenues to the throne ; and, urged by thirst of gain, combined with the settlers in acts of the most flagrant injustice : so that the wrongs of the Mexicans continued unabated.

Charles V. however, persevered in enacting the most salutary and humane code of laws for the welfare of the colonies. In looking over those laws, we find many of them breathing a spirit of humanity and sound policy, that would do honour to the most enlightened age. It was enacted, that *the discoverers, the settlers, and their posterity, and those born in the country, were to be preferred before all others, in offices of church, state, and jurisprudence.* In that plain and important regulation was comprised a fundamental principle well calculated to promote the prosperity, and secure the affections, of the colonists. A departure from this principle ever has been, and ever will be, fatal to the sovereignty of a mother country over its colonies.

It was likewise enacted, that *the aborigines were to be considered as free men, and vassals of the crown of Spain ;* the colonies were declared to be *an integral part of the monarchy ;* and to such an extent were the *rights* of the Americans protected, that no law promulgated in the ~~mo~~ther country could take effect, unless sanctioned

by the representative government of the colonies, which was vested in the council of the Indies.

How different a scene would have been displayed in Spanish America, from that which it now exhibits, if these wise and just principles had been faithfully observed by the successors of Charles V. ! But, alas ! experience has afforded melancholy proofs, that they have all been long since scattered to the winds ; and, in their place, has been established a system of colonial policy, having for its aim the perpetuity of ignorance, injustice, and despotism, over the new world—a system which has terminated in the political degradation, and even abject thralldom, of the Creoles as well as Indians. Ask the European Spaniard, why these salutary laws have never been put in execution, since the day of their enactment ? and, if he is capable of an impartial answer, he will reply, that such laws would have placed a check on his pride and avarice, and would have prevented him from exercising an unnatural authority over the lives and property of millions of Americans.

The viceroys, sent out as representatives of the king, to carry into effect the "*Leyes de las Indias*," and to guard the interests of the Creole, were the first and most distinguished violators

of those very laws. The vast expanse of ocean between them and the mother country, freed them from all restraint. Surrounded by all the pomp and splendour of royalty, they thought only of exercising regal powers, and of amassing riches by every possible means, so that, on their return to Spain, they might, by the aid and powerful influence of gold, completely prevent every complaint of the Americans from reaching the throne. In a little time corruption spread through every department of government in Old Spain ; so that the viceroys, captains general, intendants, and the dignitaries of the church, who were sent to America, together with all their immediate agents, formed a strong phalanx, combined in their interests and views ; and, as they were the only channel through which complaints could be transmitted from America to the Peninsula, it is obvious, that not one grievance in ten thousand, which occurred in the colonies, ever reached the council of the Indies, much less the ear of the monarch. At length, so confident did these tyrants become, in the exercise of their iniquitous system, that they treated with scorn and cruelty every Creole who dared to resist their imperious mandates ; and hence was established a system of passive obedience

and suffering, on the part of both Creole and Indian, such as was never before exhibited, and such as no colonists, in any age, or in any country, had ever before endured.

The European Spaniards, having thus acquired the supreme authority, and conjoining in their hands all the civil, military, and ecclesiastical employments, committed, with impunity, enormities of the deepest dye. Justice became subservient to caprice and interest; and dissensions were fomented between the European and Creole. The latter found himself cut off from every hope of redress; saw his rights, as a man, prostrated, and all the paths to social distinctions impeded by obstacles he could not overcome. Thus degraded and persecuted, every hatred was engendered, and from his heart were banished all feelings of consanguinity.

After the death of Charles V. his successors appear to have studied which of them could most outrageously trample on the laws enacted during that monarch's reign. The Americans have not only been excluded from the privileges granted them by those laws, but even the descendants of the conquerors have been despoiled of many of their rights. Men without education, talent, or character, have been ap-

pointed to civil, military, and ecclesiastical offices of the greatest responsibility; and corruption, in the latter period, had reached so great a height, that most offices in America were either sold at a fixed price, or procured by court parasites.

During the famous, or rather infamous, administration of Godoy, sacrilegiously called the Prince of Peace, every office in America, from that of the viceroy down to that of a menial dependent of the custom-house, was publicly sold; except in a few instances, in which they were bestowed on the servants of the prince, as a premium for their intrigues, or, as it was styled, to reward their fidelity to his royal master or royal mistress. A major-domo of the royal household has been elevated to the government of an American province; and there have been intendants, and judges of the Real Audiencia, the highest judicial tribunal in America, who were men known in Spain for their vices only, or as panders to the passions of the prince and the queen. Under men like these were the lives and the properties of the Spanish Americans placed. Out of *one hundred and sixty viceroys*, who have ruled in America, four only were Creoles born; and even those four were brought up from their infancy in

Spain, and were appointed to the station from accidental circumstances, or through the influence of family connexions in the Peninsula.

The government of Spain, dreading the introduction of foreign literature, and the culture of those natural talents, with which the Creole is so highly gifted, placed every bar to his improvement, by impeding a system of liberal education. It was particularly studious to preserve the Creoles from the contaminating intercourse of foreigners.

In the colleges, the Latin language, ancient philosophy, theological dogmas, mathematics, and some superficial branches of education, alone are taught. The elements of general knowledge are withheld from the students; and the greater part of the Creoles are unacquainted with history, except, perhaps, that of Spain. Many attempts have been made to introduce public schools in different parts of Mexico, but they have always failed, through the secret or open opposition of the Spanish government, which has not hesitated to declare, that *it was not expedient for learning to become general in America.*

The eulogies passed on the course of education in Mexico, by M. De Humboldt, are calculated to convey, to a reader unacquaint-

ed with the real state of that country, an impression, that an excellent system of education has been established and disseminated by the government. This is not the only instance in which that enlightened traveller and philosopher has flattered the Spanish government; but he has occasionally compensated for this incense, by developing many unpalatable truths. The most superficial observer, who has visited Mexico, must have discovered the great want of seminaries of education; for it is only in the city of Mexico, that any scholastic establishments, deserving that name, are to be found; and the abject ignorance of the great body of society throughout the kingdom affords a lamentable evidence of the paucity of institutions of this nature. There is not, in fact, a despotic country, in any part of the old world, which professes Christianity, where education is so limited, and where foreign literature is so little known, as in Mexico.

The commerce and agriculture of the Creoles have likewise felt the fatal and dreadful influence of Spanish despotism. The commerce of the colonies has been restricted to a few Cadiz merchants. The arts, exactions, and injustice, of those avaricious monopolists, would scarcely be believed by the civilized world. Our limits

will not permit us to detail them; but we may observe, that extortion was the leading feature of that disgraceful commerce. The shipments to Mexico consisted of the miserable manufactures of Spain, or of the imperfect products of her agriculture, and of some foreign fabrics, so burthened with imposts, that only the most wealthy classes of society could buy them. The consumption of such cargoes was forced upon the Creoles by every arbitrary and ingenious measure, to the exclusion of commerce through any other channel but that of old Spain, and to the neglect of those advantages which all-bountiful nature has granted the Americans, in the fertility of their soil, and genial climate. To insure to Spain the trade in wines and brandies, the Creoles were forbidden to manufacture either; olives were not allowed to be planted; the cultivation of the silk-worm was interdicted; and, with regard to vines, even such as had been raised for the purpose of affording the Creole a grateful fruit, became an object of jealousy to the Cadiz monopolists, and an order was actually sent out by the government of Spain, to grub up all the vines in the country!!

Tobacco, an article most essential to the comfort of a Spanish American, was a monopoly of



the crown. In Mexico, it is only permitted to be cultivated in the district of Orizaba. The planter was not allowed to seek a market for what he raised; it was forcibly taken from him, at a fixed price, by the king, who manufactured, and retailed it out, at an enormous advance, to the people. The revenue derived from this monopoly was immense; and the unfortunate planter who raised, and the people who consumed the plant, had the mortification to see the revenue, derived from this source, divided and squandered away amongst a host of European Spaniards, who came, almost annually, from Spain, to fill the posts in the administration of tobacco. When a vacancy occurred, by death or otherwise, vain was the application of a Creole to fill it, except in some rare instances, and, even then, appointments were the result of bribery.

Such is a brief outline of the injustice and oppression, to which the Creole of Spanish America was so long a passive victim. manifold as were the grievances, they may be summed up by saying, that he was deprived of the enjoyment of his social, and even of all his natural rights, except so far as it occasionally suited the caprice or interest of a despot to grant them to him as an indulgence. In this

state of things in America, the struggles in the Peninsula commenced.

The news of the declaration of war against France, on the 6th of June, 1808, by the Supreme Junta of Seville, instead of exciting feelings of disaffection among the Creoles, or opening to their view the career of ambition, was, by them, enthusiastically received. Ferdinand was proclaimed, with every demonstration of joy and loyalty. Congratulatory addresses, from all quarters, poured in to the viceroys. The temples of divine worship resounded with the most fervent supplications to the Deity for the release of their monarch; every house presented pictures of their favourite king; and the air was filled with shouts of "*Viva Fernando VII.*" Unanimous resolves were adopted, to repel the meditated dominion of the French, and to afford generous and abundant resources to their European brethren in arms. One universal sentiment of ardent loyalty pervaded the American colonies, and the poor Creole seems to have thrown a veil of oblivion over all his wrongs, and to have directed his whole soul, at that juncture, to the cause of Spain. Future ages will scarcely believe, that a people thus generous and loyal were about to experience such heart-rending injuries, as have made the bloody

horrors of the conquest trivial by comparison, and that a war of extermination was soon to be declared against them, in reward for their generosity and loyalty.

After the occurrences at Bayonne had taken place, orders from Murat were received in the colonies ; and, at the same moment, when the Creoles were swearing allegiance to their captured monarch, the Europeans were strenuously engaged in taking the most effectual measures to bring the Americans over to *French allegiance* ; and some of the viceroys openly made advances to the people, in the name of the emperor Napoleon. Emissaries from king Joseph spread themselves over the continent, to pave the way for the adoption of the French government. They brought orders from *Ferdinand, and the council of the Indies, to transfer to France the allegiance of America*. The Europeans received the French emissaries with open arms, while the Creoles publicly burnt their proclamations, and, with cries of "*Viva Fernando VII.*" expelled these political intruders from their soil. These are facts of public notoriety ; they stand recorded ; and cannot be questioned.

Thus were the Americans the defenders of their king ; while the conduct of the Europeans

and their chiefs was stained with treachery of the darkest hue.

While the French gained ground in the Peninsula, and Spain was torn by contending factions, the defection of the European Spaniards became so glaring as to produce, in the short space of six months, an indiscriminate rising of the colonists. Without concert, from the same motives, and with the same views, the Creoles attempted, and, in some instances, effected the deposition of their perjured chiefs; declaring, at the same time, their determination to hold their country for their legitimate monarch.

This course of conduct was no sooner made known in Spain, than, in place of being viewed as an evidence of loyalty, or as a great political event growing out of imperious circumstances, it was considered by the Cadiz regency as an outrageous rebellion, and war was declared against Caraccas, in the month of August, 1810. But we must confine ourselves more particularly to Mexico.

Don José Iturrigaray, viceroy at that period, on receiving intelligence of the critical situation in which Ferdinand was involved, and looking with a cautious eye on the strange orders of Ferdinand, those of the council of the Indies,

and of Murat, and aware likewise of the local dangers which threatened the kingdom, from the known hatred existing between the Creoles and Europeans, proposed calling a junta, to be formed by a representation from each province, in order to adopt a provisional government, in which the people might have confidence. The purity of Iturrigaray's intentions was known then, and is still acknowledged, by every enlightened Creole in the country. His sole object was to save the kingdom from the horrors of anarchy, and from French intrigue. In the adoption of these measures, the viceroy was cordially supported by the cabildo, who, by an energetic memorial, pointed out that those measures would alone inspire confidence. The memorial proposed, that the viceroy should remain as the representative of the king; that the existing authorities should retain the same power as before; but that a governing junta should also be established; composed of the royal audiencia, the archbishop, the municipality, and deputies from the several ecclesiastical and secular bodies, the nobility, principal citizens, and military.

In the formation of such a junta, it was obvious that Creoles would be blended with Europeans: but the latter, dreading the ascendancy

which the Creoles might gain from a popular government, opposed this loyal and rational overture, and secretly determined on boldly removing the viceroy. This resolution was promptly carried into effect; and, privately arming themselves, they arrested the unsuspecting viceroy and his family, on the night of the 15th of September, 1808, and sent them prisoners to the Peninsula.

This act excited universal indignation among all classes of Americans, by whom the viceroy was held in the highest estimation. His administration had been characterized by a course very different from that of any of his predecessors. He was not only benign and just in his decisions, but indefatigable in the measures he adopted for the internal improvement of the kingdom. It was, indeed, his popularity among the Americans, that excited the jealousy of the old Spaniards.

These circumstances, conjoined with the subsequent massacre of several distinguished Americans, and the arrest and banishment of others who had espoused the viceroy's plans, highly incensed the Mexicans. In this state of fermentation arrived Iturrigaray's successor, Venegas, bringing with him from Spain rewards, distinctions, and offices, for those Euro-

peans who had been conspicuous instruments in deposing the late viceroy.

The conduct of Venegas, during his career in the Peninsula, had not been calculated to inspire confidence among the people over whom he was sent to preside. He had delivered up one or two armies, and had otherwise acted in a manner calculated to make him a very obnoxious character in the eyes of the Americans.

These events, combined with the recollection of their former grievances, operated powerfully on the minds of the Mexicans; and, at length, the rancour, which had been so long smothered in their breasts, burst forth: for, being no longer able to bear with such flagrant injustice, finding that every day added new weight to their oppressions, and seeing no hope of redress but through their own exertions, they entered into a plan to hurl their tyrants from their seats of power.

In this conspiracy were engaged many of the most distinguished men in the kingdom, principally ecclesiastics and lawyers. It was conducted with the greatest secrecy, and extended to almost every city in the kingdom. A simultaneous insurrection was intended in the provinces; and the plot had nearly reached maturity, when it was checked by one of those accidents which frequently prevent the accom-

plishment of great projects; else, it is highly probable that Venegas would have been the last viceroy on the Mexican throne.

One of the conspirators, in a death-bed confession, revealed not only the plot, but the names of many of his principal accomplices. Venegas was alarmed at the magnitude of the plan, but was in hopes, that by seizing the principals he should be able to check it; and he took the most prompt and active measures to arrest those who were denounced. In the province of Guanaxuato, the head of the conspiracy was Dr. Hidalgo, the rector of Dolores; in which town, and the adjacent one of San Miguel el Grandè, many of the conspirators resided.

Venegas despatched orders for the arrest of Hidalgo and his party; but, as some of their colleagues were in the confidence of the viceroy, and knew the measures he was adopting, they immediately despatched private couriers to apprise the rector of what was in agitation. The intelligence was received by Captain Don Ignacio Allende, who commanded a small body of the king's troops in San Miguel. He flew to Hidalgo, at Dolores, with the information. They at once agreed that flight was of no avail; they knew that, if taken, death was inevitable, and therefore resolved on making a desperate



effort to save themselves and their party. Allende having brought over his men, and the proscribed party being in readiness, the tocsin of revolt was sounded, on the night of the 10th of September, 1810: and thus commenced the civil wars of Mexico, which form the subject of the following sketch.

The *pueblo* of Dolores consisted principally of Indians, who adored their pastor Hidalgo, and who immediately joined him. He proceeded to San Miguel, where his numbers were considerably augmented. Thence he marched to the city of Zelaya, where he was joined by immense throngs of Indians, armed with clubs, slings, and missile weapons.

As matters had so far proceeded well, it was next proposed to nominate a commander. Allende, being the only military man, was named; but, as Hidalgo's popularity was considered infinitely more important to the cause, in its critical situation, than mere military acquirements, he was chosen commander-in-chief, with the rank of captain-general.

Hidalgo was a man of irreproachable character, and beloved, not only within the range of his rectory, but in the adjoining provinces. He was regarded as a man of penetration, and considered well informed; that is, he had ac-

quired such knowledge as a well-educated Creole usually possesses. His reading had been confined to such works as the jealousy of the old Spaniards, and the scrutiny of the Inquisition, permitted to be circulated; of course, it is not presumable, that from such sources he could have derived much knowledge of the world. He was frank and generous, and knew very little of cunning, intrigue, and baseness, the characteristics of his opponents.

Hidalgo considered, that, as the names and plans of the conspirators had been revealed, and their projects thus nipped in the bud; it was necessary to make desperate exertions, and resort to every possible means of exciting the courage and passions of the Indians.\* With

\* It must not be inferred, from the use of this word *Indian*, that the people to whom it is applied resemble the savages of North America. They are, it is true, descendants of the aborigines; but, with few exceptions, they are a civilized people, tractable, and accustomed to the labours of civilized life. In many points they preserve the customs of their ancestors, and particularly cherish their native language; for although, in general, they understand and speak Spanish correctly, yet, in their intercourse with each other, they use their native language. Notwithstanding they all profess Christianity, yet the Spanish priests frequently discover them sacrificing, in private, according to their ancient system of idolatry. The Mexican Indian, although mild, and obedient to his task-master, yet bears

this view, he unfortunately and precipitately authorized the cry of "Destruction to the Gachupins!"\* Hidalgo does not appear, by

in remembrance the outrages the Spaniards inflicted upon his forefathers, and secretly sighs for the day of revenge. All that the Spanish government and Spanish writers have said about their loyalty and fidelity, is mere fiction. During the present revolution, they have invariably manifested their ill-will towards the Spaniards. In the towns and villages where no royal troops were actually quartered, a Creole insurgent, in flying from his enemies, has always found an inviolable asylum among the Indians: whereas, if a royalist took refuge in any Indian village, within the jurisdiction of the insurgents, he never escaped. The descendants of the Indian caciques have a high degree of family pride, and consider a connexion with an European Spaniard as a pollution of blood.

\* This term *Gachupin* has been variously interpreted; but it is universally used by the Creoles and Indians as a word of contempt. The Spaniards say, it means "a man with two heads," thereby conveying an idea of superior understanding; and that it took its origin from the invasion of Cortez, upon one of his cavalry being killed. The Indians, who till then had never seen a horse, supposed the animal and its rider to be a single animal. When they beheld the horse and rider fall, they ran up and examined the phenomenon, and finding the man distinct from the horse, they expressed their surprise by exclaiming, "Gatzopin." The Indians, however, flatly deny the Spanish story, and say the word means "thief." But be that as it may, it is most certain that the word is now used by both as a term of scorn and opprobrium.

any act of his life previous to the revolution, to have been a sanguinary man ; and, therefore, his sanction to the cry of " Destruction to the Gachupins and their race !" ought to be attributed to the reason before-mentioned, and not to a deliberate intention of indiscriminately sacrificing them. But, while this apology is offered, his error is deeply to be deplored ; not merely on grounds of humanity, but because *it is to this impolitic act that the future failure of the revolutionists may in a great measure be ascribed.*

If Hidalgo had reflected that the great body of conspirators were Creoles, distinguished by their wealth and high standing in the community, and consequently sure to take alarm at a commotion that menaced their lives and property, he would have pursued a very different course, and would have had almost every Creole in the country in his favour ; but, rendered desperate, as before observed, by considering his colleagues destroyed, and their plans discovered, he made use of the Indians as a dernier resource, and, by exciting them to the destruction of all the Gachupins, committed a dreadful and irremediable error.

The first steps of the Indians were marked by horrid excesses. In every place they passed

through, the European Spaniards that fell into their hands, and many Creoles, were slaughtered. A large portion of the Creole population, who were as desirous as Hidalgo and his party for the emancipation of their country, now began to tremble for their personal safety, and sought protection from their ancient oppressors. Nevertheless, the forces of Hidalgo continued rapidly to swell; and, during his stay at Zelaya, the Indians from every quarter flocked to his standard. Numbers of Creole priests, and some royalist soldiers, also joined him. When he left Zelaya, his army consisted of nearly twenty thousand men; but it was a heterogeneous mass, without fire-arms or order. With this force he marched upon Guanajuato, the capital of the intendency of that name, and a city next in point of wealth to the metropolis of New Spain; the richest gold and silver mines in all Spanish America being in the vicinage of Guanajuato.

On the approach of the patriotic army, the intendant of the province, with all the Spaniards, some Creoles, and the few troops which were in the city, shut themselves up in the castle, and determined on an obstinate defence. Hidalgo summoned them to surrender, and offered them humane terms, which were rashly refused.

The place was attacked, and carried. The unfortunate Spaniards, and all who adhered to them, were sacrificed by the infuriated Indians. In vain Hidalgo interposed, to prevent the slaughter: he now saw, when too late, that revenge was the predominant feeling among his Indians, and that nothing would satisfy them but the extermination of the Gachupins. The treasures which fell into the hands of the conquerors would appear incredible to the reader, if he did not consider, that we have reference to a city surrounded by the richest mines in the known world. The sacking of the city continued for three days; and the plunderers were loaded with doubloons, dollars, and ingots of gold and silver. The precious metals were found in some private houses, as well as in the public buildings, piled in vast heaps. The Indians were occupied several days in carrying off these treasures; and it was supposed that each man took away at least five hundred dollars, and the greater proportion several thousands. The Indians, afterwards, offered their doubloons for sale at four reals each, conceiving that they were only gilt medals.\*

\* The people, of all classes, wear medals suspended from the neck, bearing the impression of some favourite

Hidalgo had now such an overflowing treasury, that he paid his soldiers a dollar a day each ; and as to his officers, he allowed them to help themselves to whatever amount they liked.

From the preceding relation it may be inferred, that Hidalgo was highly culpable, in permitting the perpetration of those deeds of rapine and murder. We have before stated, that his private character was unblemished ; but, in the novel situation in which he found himself placed, it was not extraordinary that he should permit the Indians to enjoy the first-fruits of their exertions. He considered it politic to let them have palpable proofs that they would profit by the revolution ; and, with regard to the slaughter of the Spaniards, it was impossible for him to prevent it. Still it is a fact, that there are now a great number of European Spaniards and Creoles living in Mexico, who were protected and saved from death by the humanity of Hidalgo.

saint, but generally of the Virgin of Guadalupe: some of them are of silver, others merely gilt; and as, in shape and appearance, the latter resemble a doubloon, the poor Indians knew not the difference. Nothing can more strongly elucidate the wretched ignorance and poverty of the great mass of Indians, than this anecdote. A real, of Mexican currency, is the eighth of a dollar.

go, and, in many instances, most ungratefully did they requite his clemency. They proved themselves, subsequently, the most cruel and implacable enemies of the patriots, and particularly of the insurgent Indians, who fell into their hands. These were massacred, in the most wanton manner, by the very prisoners whose lives Hidalgo had formerly saved.

After the capture of Guanajuato, Hidalgo found his forces augmenting so fast, that he determined to advance on the city of Mexico. He proceeded, taking the route of Valladolid, gathering an hourly accession of Indians, and some few royalist deserters.

The revolt had by this time spread with electric rapidity over a great part of the kingdom. Even in the city of Mexico, Puebla de los Angeles, and in other places, the Spanish authorities were trembling for their safety. It was a critical moment for the Spaniards; their government was upon the very point of being overthrown, and their persons sacrificed. The forces of the government were entirely Creole; and if any conspicuous officer, either in the cities of Mexico or Puebla, had then declared in favour of Hidalgo, the revolution would have succeeded.

The Creoles beheld, with alarm, their fate de-



pending on an ignorant and infuriated body of Indians, and were compelled to rally round the existing authorities, as the only means of personal safety. Very different would have been their feelings and conduct, if the revolution had broken out as it was *originally planned, amongst the wealthy and leading Creoles of the principal cities*: but, as the plot had been prematurely frustrated, and the rebellion had commenced with the Indians, from whom all classes of whites had as much to fear as the Spaniards, and as the career of Hidalgo and his party was marked by horrid excesses, it became the policy, indeed the imperious interest, of the Creoles, to adhere to the viceroy. Still, however, there were daily desertions from the royalists, and the forces of Hidalgo were assuming a formidable aspect. He had already marched eighty leagues without opposition, and was approaching the gates of the city, with at least one hundred and ten thousand men. It is true, that, amongst this vast multitude, there were not more than *a thousand musquets*; but every heart was animated with a lofty spirit, and was full of ardour. Had they been well directed, or been subject to any species of order, they might, even with clubs and slings, have committed great havoc among their opponents.

The viceroy Venegas prepared to resist the storm with great firmness, and had previously taken prompt and strong measures to throw Hidalgo and his party into confusion. He issued proclamations, breathing death and extermination against the rebels. He decreed, that all persons who should be taken with arms in their hands, should be shot, whether they were of the clergy or not, or in whatever numbers; and he allowed only fifteen minutes for each criminal to prepare for eternity. At the same time, he offered his majesty's pardon to all who should return to their allegiance. The church likewise hurled its thunders with an unsparing hand. The archbishop of Mexico, in the fulness of his holy zeal, declared all the insurgents to be *heretics*. He excommunicated them in a body, with all the ceremony and rigour of papal anathemas; and painted, in vivid colours, the enormity of their crime, in having taken up arms against a monarch, on whose head the sacred unction had been poured. He ordered all the Spanish clergy, and their faithful Creoles, to represent from the pulpit, and to circulate reports, that the great object of the revolutionists was to subvert and destroy the holy catholic religion; and he directed the subaltern clergy to sow discord and uneasiness

among families, by means of the confessional chair. In short, no exertions were spared by the archbishop to alarm the credulous, and to agitate the minds of the Mexican people; and there is no doubt, that his fulminations had a powerful tendency to paralyze the operations of the revolutionists.

On the approach of Hidalgo to the city of Mexico, the viceroy displayed great activity and presence of mind. He barricaded the streets, and adopted every manner of defence of which the city was susceptible: all the arms that could be procured were distributed among the citizens of the capital; and he pointed out to them the dreadful consequences that would ensue, in case they permitted Hidalgo and his party to enter into the city.

A detachment of troops was despatched from the city, under the command of Truxillo, to check the advance of Hidalgo. He took post in a narrow defile of the mountains, at a place called Las Cruces, about eight leagues from the capital, where he awaited the insurgents. An action took place; but the overwhelming force of Hidalgo compelled him to abandon his position, and retreat upon the city, where he arrived, with the loss of his artillery, and a number of his troops. This disaster spread a gloom over

the royalists; but the viceroy persevered in placing the city in a state of defence, and endeavoured, by his presence, to animate the people.

In the account that Truxillo gave of the affair at Las Cruces, a stranger would suppose that he had defended the defile with the obstinacy of a Leonidas; but it appears there was a part of the Spartan hero's conduct, which Truxillo and some other Spanish officers did not think expedient to imitate. He boasts, in his despatch, that such were his loyal feelings and indignation, that he had *fired upon the bearers of a flag of truce, which Hidalgo had sent to him.*

After the action of Las Cruces, Hidalgo advanced to the Hacienda of *Quaximalpa*, only five leagues distant from the city of Mexico. Hidalgo and his army were now in full view of the capital of that kingdom, the overthrow of whose government they had resolved to effect. A bold and enterprising man would have decided the fate of the empire in less than twenty-four hours. He would have calculated, that, although his forces were undisciplined, yet they were brave and enthusiastic; and such was their great numerical superiority, that a comparatively trifling sacrifice of lives would have insured success to the attempt.

Unfortunately, Hidalgo possessed, in his character, none of the requisites essential for that critical moment. He paused, at the instant when activity and energy should have marked all his actions, and, instead of advancing directly to the assault, sent a summons to the viceroy to surrender the city. To this demand no answer was returned; and Venegas contrived, by emissaries, to impress Hidalgo with the opinion, that the preparations for defence had rendered the city almost impregnable, to a disordered multitude, without fire-arms. Hidalgo ought, however, to have considered, that the city contained about thirty thousand people of the same description as his army, upon whose disaffection to the royalists he could have relied, and that the whole armed force did not exceed ten thousand men, a body by no means sufficient to guard the extensive lines of that vast city. Had he attacked it at different points, with divisions of twenty or thirty thousand men, there would have been, at least, a chance of his succeeding; while the loss of the opportunity he then had of striking a decisive blow, would encourage the enemy, and enable them to strengthen their defence, and even to act on the offensive. None of these reflections appear to have occurred to Hidalgo. On the contrary, he was struck with

a panic, and, resolving to abandon the project of attacking the city, commenced a retreat, after remaining two or three days in sight of Mexico.

The viceroy had early despatched Don *Felice Maria Calleja* to concentrate the royal forces, and he was actually on his march to the relief of the city, with a well appointed Creole army of ten thousand men, and a train of artillery, at the very time when Hidalgo retreated from before Mexico. Venegas, eased of his apprehensions for the capital, ordered Calleja to attack Hidalgo.

The two armies met at Aculco, where an obstinate and bloody battle was fought. The Indians evinced a degree of valour entirely unexpected on the part of the royalists. They rushed with their clubs on the bayonets of the columns of the enemy, and fell in heaps. They were so totally ignorant of the effects of artillery, that, in the height of their enthusiasm, they fearlessly ran up to the cannon, and with their *sombreros de petate* (flag hats) endeavoured to stop up the muzzles of the guns. A scene ensued that baffles description. Without order, and under no command, each one acted for himself, and confusion was spread in every direction through the army of Hidalgo. At

length, the discipline of the royal troops prevailed; they took advantage of the disorder of the Indians, put them to the rout, and commenced a slaughter which ceased only when the Spaniards had become satiated with the work of death. Calleja, in his despatches, exults that the insurgents lost ten thousand men, of whom five thousand were deliberately put to the sword.

After this disastrous battle, Hidalgo retreated on Guanajuato; whence he fell back upon *Guadalajara*, leaving the rear-guard under Allende in the former place.

Calleja, flushed with the victory he had recently gained, resolved to follow it up, and accordingly advanced on Guanajuato. Allende gave him battle at the Hacienda of *Marfil*, about a league from the city. The patriots, in this action, were not in a situation to cope with Calleja, but they defended themselves with great obstinacy. They were defeated; and Allende, with the remains of his troops, rejoined Hidalgo.

Calleja now entered the city of Guanajuato as a conqueror, and there exhibited his vindictive and cruel disposition without restraint. Rendered furious by the timely retreat of Hidalgo, and at the conduct which the inhabitants of that city had displayed in favour of the

rebellion, he determined to make an example so dreadful, as should strike terror into the revolted provinces.

The sacrifice of the prisoners taken at the battle of Marfil was not sufficient to satiate his vindictive spirit. He glutted his vengeance on the defenceless populace of Guanaxuato. Men, women, and children, were driven, by his orders, into the great square; and several thousands (it is said fourteen) of these poor wretches, were butchered in the most barbarous manner. Their throats were cut; the principal fountain of the city was literally overflowing with blood, and, far from concealing these savage acts, Calleja, in his despatches, exults in the honour of communicating to the viceroy the intelligence, that he had purged the city of its rebellious population. The only apology offered for this mode of sacrifice was, that it would have wasted too much powder and ball to have shot them, and that therefore, on a principle of economy, *their throats were cut.*

The tragic scenes of Guanaxuato were the commencement of a system of cruelty, which Calleja and his contemporaries exercised in almost every city, town, and village, through which they marched. His name, united with that of *Cruz, Concha, Yturvidi, Castañon, Ne-*



*grete*, and *Liñan*, will be transmitted to future ages with the bitter execrations of the Mexicans.

This monster soon received proofs from the Cadiz regency of their high satisfaction at his conduct. They appointed him to succeed Venegas in the viceregal power.

No sooner was he seated in the supreme chair of state, than terror spread throughout the empire. Murder, fire, and devastation, were dealt out with a merciless hand, and neither age, sex, nor condition, could repress the rage of this barbarian. These his qualifications appear to have met with warm admirers in Old Spain, where he was elevated to high honours. He was created *Count of Calderon*, and subsequently appointed to the command of the expedition formed at Cadiz for the subjugation of South America. Fortunately, that expedition has failed: and happy is it for the Americans that Calleja did not again pollute the soil of their country; for had he landed on it, his hands would again have been dyed in blood, and his ears again delighted with deep-breathed maledictions. But to resume the history—

Hidalgo's army, although it had sustained a loss of at least thirty thousand men, in killed,

prisoners, and deserters, was still about eighty thousand strong; and as some pains had been taken to reduce them to order, they were much better calculated to make a resistance than before.

The heavy guns from the works at San Blas had been conveyed to Guadalajara, and lines were thrown up, which at least bore the aspect of fortifications. Hidalgo felt more confident, and looked forward to his being able to make a firm stand at Guadalajara. He endeavoured to excite the spirits of his army by energetic and judicious harangues, and earnestly solicited the Indians not to commit the same errors that had occurred in the previous combats. Thus prepared, he awaited the approach of Calleja, who soon made his appearance before the city. The battle was fought at the pass of the *bridge of Calderon*. In the early part of the action, the patriots swept all before them; they rushed in among, and broke the royal columns. But confusion arising among the Indians, a desperate charge was made upon them by a regiment which Calleja had kept in reserve. A general rout ensued. The Indians, flying in all directions, were pursued, and massacred by thousands.

The most appalling scenes of cruelty were

renewed, the details of which are forbore, lest the heart of the reader should sicken at the picture of sanguinary horror. Suffice it to say, that every prisoner, who fell into the hands of the relentless Calleja, was murdered; and a tragedy similar to that which was performed at Guanaxuato, was acted at Guadalajara, towards all persons on whom the least suspicion lighted of having supported the cause of Hidalgo.

The Spaniards, animated by these successes; issued orders to exterminate the inhabitants of every town and village that manifested symptoms of adherence to the rebels, and, from the pulpit, new fulminations were hurled against all who opposed the royal authority. The most ridiculous stories were circulated among the credulous and superstitious natives. Tracts were published by the clergy, stating that the recent victories had been obtained by the special intervention of the Deity, who had, during the late actions, exhibited in the clouds *crosses and palms*, in token of His protection to the royal cause. These tales were not without effect, particularly over those who had already become disheartened by discomfiture.

Hidalgo, with some of his chief officers, escaped, and took the road for the internal pro-

vinces.\* It is said that he meant to attempt by that route an escape to the United States. He reached a place called *Acatila de Bajan*, near the Saltillo; where himself and his officers were treacherously delivered up by an officer named Bustamante, on the 25th of March. In this man Hidalgo had placed the greatest confidence, and he had previously been attached to his party. Hidalgo was taken to Chihuahua, in the intendency of Durango, and there shot, on the 27th of July, 1811.

\* The internal provinces form three divisions:—

- 1st. Those of the viceroyalty:—the province of San Luis Potosi; colony of New Santander; and new kingdom of Leon.
- 2d. Eastern internal provinces:—Cohahuila, and Texas.
- 3d. Western:—Durango, Sonora, New Mexico, and the Californias.

The eastern and western provinces are each commanded by a commandant-general.

The commandant-general of the eastern provinces commands, in a military point of view, those of New Santander, New Kingdom of Leon, Cohahuila, and Texas; but the finances of the two last only pass through his hands. Those of the other two, and of San Luis, are remitted direct to the treasury of Mexico, by the intendant of the intendency of San Luis Potosi. The head-quarters of the eastern commandant-general are at Monterey.

The commandant-general of the western provinces commands, in every respect, Durango, Sonora, New Mexico, and the Californias; his head-quarters are at Chihuahua,

It would appear, from accounts published in the Gazette of Mexico, that, a few hours before his death, he made a solemn recantation of his errors ; and there is a long address, said to have been written by him, in which he unfolds to his countrymen the enormity of their crime, in taking up arms against their legitimate sovereign, and entreats them to return to their duty, &c. The friends of Hidalgo say, that all this is a royal forgery, and that he died supplicating Heaven to favour the struggles of his country for independence. But be this as it may, it is now well known, that such arts, on the part of the royalists, have been frequently employed, since the death of Hidalgo ; for, scarcely a single patriot chief of note has been executed, whose penitence, and formal abjuration of the cause he had espoused, have not been published in the Mexican Gazette.

Allende, who was taken with Hidalgo, suffered death on the 20th of June, 1811 : all the other officers were likewise executed about the same time.

## CHAPTER II.

*State of the Revolution after the death of Hidalgo—General Don José Maria Morelos—Capture of Oaxaca and Acapulco—Formation of a Congress and Constitution—Manifesto of the Junta of Zultepec—Defeat at Valladolid—General Matamoros taken prisoner, and shot—Capture of Morelos, at Tepecuacuilco—His death—Arrival of the Congress at Tehuacan—General Observations.*

THE flame of civil war had, by this time, spread itself over a great part of the kingdom; and, notwithstanding the disasters of Hidalgo, the exterminating decrees of the viceroy, and the anathemas of the church, the cause of liberty was rapidly gaining proselytes.

Many of the officers, who had escaped from the fatal action of the bridge of Calderon, retired to the several provinces, where they raised considerable bodies of Creoles and Indians, and soon astonished the royalists by their valorous exploits. With slings and clubs, they gained many important victories, and thus were enabled to procure fire-arms.

The Cadiz regency, at the end of November, 1811, despatched a body of European troops to Mexico. These, however, were soon destroyed, by the partisan warfare carried on by the Mexicans.

The patriots gained battle after battle, but the total want of concerted plans, and the deficiency of arms and munitions of war, rendered their successes of mere temporary consequence, and only gave them an influence over the country within their immediate range. This influence, however, was daily enlarging, and at length the great intendancies of *Guanajuato*, *Valladolid*, *Guadalajara*, *Zacatecas*, and parts of those of *La Puebla*, *Vera Cruz*, *Mexico*, and *San Luis Potosi*, were so far under the controul of the patriots, that the royalists were penned up in their few fortified cities, and could not move beyond their walls, but with large armies and trains of artillery. The royalists, notwithstanding, possessed many very important and decided advantages over the patriots. They acted in unison. The European Spaniards, and their Creole adherents, were under the direction of a government firmly established for centuries, which now bent all its energies in the same direction; they had men among them of military instruction, were

in possession of nearly every musquet and cannon, and all the requisites of war in the kingdom; their finances were conducted by system; their governors were adepts in the intrigues of the old world; and, lastly, they kept open, and maintained an external communication, by which they were abundantly supplied with men, arms, munitions of war, clothing, and every requisite, from abroad.

The patriots, on the other hand, were disunited, and spread over a vast space of territory. Without any form of government, that deserved the name, there was no source whence regular orders could emanate; and each provincial chief, or commandant, acted as his judgment or interest counselled. They were miserably ignorant of the military art, and, as before stated, deficient in arms and munitions of war. Their finances were under no regulation; however great the wealth that fell into their hands, it was soon squandered, instead of being employed in a manner beneficial to the nation. They were, besides, totally cut off from foreign intercourse. Many of their leaders were unlettered men, and, although brave and frank, were yet perpetually liable to be deceived by the finesse and duplicity of their opponents.

With all these great disadvantages on the side



of the patriots, it cannot be so surprising that they did not succeed, as that they should have proceeded so far as they actually had done, at the time when that distinguished patriot, *Don José Maria Morelos*, became the supreme military chief of the republic. This man was a priest, of excellent private character, and much better informed than Hidalgo, but entirely unacquainted with military science. He began his career, by forming a body of men in the western part of the province of Valladolid, in the *Tierra Caliente*, along the coast of the Pacific ocean. His standard was joined by many distinguished Creoles, and by numbers of deserters from the European troops. He had some tolerable officers, and at length succeeded, by great perseverance and activity, in equipping and partially arming a body of seven thousand men. They were well clothed ; and good discipline was established among them. They were enthusiastically attached to their commander, and sincerely devoted to the freedom of their country ; so that Morelos had the satisfaction to see all his orders obeyed with alacrity and cheerfulness. With this force of seven thousand men, Morelos not only paralyzed the movements of the Spaniards, but alarmed them infinitely more than Hidalgo had done

with his heterogeneous mass of one hundred and ten thousand.

Morelos sent a division of his army into the rich province of *Oaxaca*, whose capital soon fell into his hands, together with immense wealth. The population of *Oaxaca* received him with open arms, and thousands joined his army. Having accomplished his views on *Oaxaca*, he invested the strong city and castle of *Acapulco*, which he reduced, after a siege of *fifteen months*. Such was the cramped and distracted situation of the royalists at that time, that they could not command a force sufficient to attempt the relieving of *Acapulco*; and, indeed, several Spanish officers have expressed their opinions to the writer, that the most critical epoch of the revolution was just after Morelos had captured *Acapulco*. At that period, several other chiefs were operating in various parts of the kingdom, and distracting the movements of the royalists in every direction. Don *Guadalupe Victoria* had secured the strong holds in the province of *Vera Cruz*, Don *Manuel Teran* had a respectable force in the province of *Puebla*. *Osourno*, with another division, was spreading terror and confusion in the province of *Mexico*; while *Dr. Coss*, a priest, the *Rayons*, *Bustamante*, *Liceaga*, and

other brave officers, occupied a great part of the provinces of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Zatecas, and Guadalajara, with considerable divisions.

If Morelos had concentrated his forces in the province of Oaxaca, and fortified the important passes in the mountains of the Misteca, which constitute the only keys to its entrance; if he had directed his attention to the preservation of the strong city of Acapulco, and opened the ports of Oaxaca, on the Pacific ocean, to foreign commerce; and if he had sent a division of his army, through the province of Oaxaca, to the eastward of Vera Cruz, and had taken possession of all the country at the bottom of the Gulf of Mexico, particularly of the *fine port of Guasacualco*, and had promoted a trade with the United States, and the British Colonies, so as to have procured from abroad, arms, munitions of war, and clothing for his troops; then indeed would the Mexican revolution have assumed another aspect, and, in all human probability, would have speedily triumphed. The forces of Morelos, at that time, were amply sufficient to have executed those objects; and the funds he had at his disposal, after the capture of Oaxaca, would have enabled him to pay for

all that was required from abroad, for the use of his army.

Upwards of one thousand seroons of cochineal, and two millions of dollars in specie, were obtained by the capture of Oaxaca ; but these immense resources were soon annihilated in scenes of dissipation, or by the bad management of those to whom was entrusted the national treasury.

The royalists may now very justly say, they were saved by the ignorance of Morelos, or his inattention to all those essential matters ; in fact, he had become too sanguine of success, and conceived he should soon be able to march to the city of Mexico ; presuming, that when he had reduced the capital, the city of Vera Cruz and all the other seaports would fall, as a matter of course.

Morelos, in the midst of his military successes, appeared more anxious for the welfare of his country, than to display the character of a military chieftain. He was the first to propose and promote the formation of a civil government, and thereby gave an unequivocal proof of his patriotism. He frequently acknowledged, to his intimate friends, that he wished to divide a responsibility, to which he

felt himself unequal. With these views, he convened a congress. It was composed of forty members, from the different provinces. Don *José María Liceaga* was elected president. A constitution was framed at Apatzingan, in the province of Valladolid, and accepted and sworn to throughout all the provinces which had taken up arms in favour of the republic. Whatever may be the defects of that constitution, it certainly displays more wisdom than could have been expected from men brought up as the framers of it had been, and situated as they then were,

The first important act of this legislative body was, to present to their European brethren a manifesto, stating the causes which had compelled them to take up arms. They reiterated their desire for peace, upon the basis of representation and justice, and on those terms they offered to lay down their arms. This manifesto was energetic and just, but breathed throughout a spirit of conciliation; it repeated the sentiments that had been expressed to the viceroy in 1812, by the patriotic junta of Zultepec, and in substance was as follows.

*Principles, on which, as a basis, the patriots are ready to sign an armistice for the suspension of hostilities, and to enter into a treaty with the royalists.*

*“ First. The sovereignty resides in the mass of the nation.*

*“ Second. Spain and America are integral parts of the same monarchy, subject to the same king, but respectively equal, and without any relative dependence and subordination on either part.*

*“ Third. America, in her state of fidelity, has more right to convoke the Cortes, and call together representatives of the few patriots of Spain, already infected with disloyalty, than Spain has to call over deputies from America, by means of whom we can never be worthily represented.*

*“ Fourth. During the absence of the king, the inhabitants of the Peninsula have no right to appropriate to themselves the sovereign power, and represent it in these dominions.*

*“ Fifth. All the authorities emanating from this origin are null.*

*“ Sixth. For the American nation to conspire against them, by refusing to sub-*

mit to an arbitrary power, is no more than using its own rights.

“ *Seventh.* This, far from being a crime of high treason, is a service worthy of the king’s gratitude, and a proof of patriotism, which his majesty would approve, if he were on the spot.

“ *Eighth.* After what has occurred in the Peninsula, as well as in this country, since the overthrow of the throne, the American nation has a right to require a guarantee for its security; and this can be no other than putting into execution the right which it has, of keeping these dominions for their legitimate sovereign singly, and without the intervention of any European people.”

On these incontrovertible principles, the following just pretensions are founded :—

“ *First.* That the Europeans resign the command of the armed force into the hands of a national congress independent of Spain, representing Ferdinand VII. and capable of securing his rights in these dominions.

“ *Second.* That the Europeans remain in the class of citizens, under the protection of the laws, without being injured in their persons, families, or property,

**“ Third.** That the Europeans, at present in office, remain, with the honours, distinctions, and privileges thereof, and part of their revenue, but without exercising authority.

**“ Fourth.** That, as soon as this state of independence is declared, all antecedent injuries and occurrences be buried in oblivion; the most effectual measures, for this purpose, are to be adopted; and all the inhabitants of the land, as well Creoles as Europeans, shall indiscriminately constitute a nation of American citizens, vassals of Ferdinand VII. and bent only on promoting the public felicity.

**“ Fifth.** That, in such a case, America would be able to contribute in favour of the few Spaniards engaged in sustaining the war of Spain, with those sums the national congress may assign, in testimony of our fraternity with the Peninsula, and to prove that both aspire to the same end.

**“ Sixth.** That the Europeans, who may be desirous of quitting the kingdom, be granted passports for whatever place they may wish; but, in that case, officers shall not be allowed the portion of their pay that might have been granted them.”



*The principles on which the patriots propose to prosecute the war, are—*

- “ First. A war between brethren and fellow-citizens ought not to be more cruel than between foreign nations.”*
- “ Second. The two contending parties acknowledge Ferdinand VII. Of this the Americans have given evident proofs, by swearing allegiance to him, and proclaiming him in every part; by carrying his portrait as their emblem; invoking his august name in their acts and proceedings, and stamping it on their coins and money. On him the enthusiasm of all rests, and on these grounds the insurrectional party has always acted.”*
- “ Third. The rights of nations and of war, inviolable even amongst the most infidel and savage people, ought to be much more so amongst us, who profess the same creed, and who are subject to the same sovereign and laws.”*
- “ Fourth. It is opposed to Christian morality, to act from hatred, rancour, or personal revenge.”*
- “ Fifth. Since the sword is to decide the dispute, and not the arms of reason and pru-*

dence, by means of agreements and adjustments founded on the basis of natural equity; the contest ought to be continued in such a manner, as to be least shocking to humanity, already too much afflicted not to merit our most tender compassion."

Hence are naturally deduced, the following just pretensions:—

- " *First.* That prisoners be not treated as criminals, guilty of high treason.
- " *Second.* That no one be sentenced to death, or execution, for this cause, but that all be kept as hostages, for the purpose of exchange; that they be not molested with irons and imprisonment; and, as this is a measure of precaution, let them be put loose in places where they cannot injure the views of the party by whom they may be detained.
- " *Third.* That each one be treated according to his class and condition.
- " *Fourth.* That, as the rights of war do not permit the effusion of blood, but in the act of combat, when this is over, let no one be killed; nor let those be fired upon who fly, or throw down their arms, but let them be made prisoners by the victor.

- " *Fifth.* That, as it is contrary to the same rights, as well as to those of nature, to enter with fire and sword into defenceless towns, or to assign, by tenths and fifths, persons to be shot, by which the innocent are confounded with the guilty; let no one be allowed, under the most severe penalties, to commit such enormities, which so greatly dishonour a Christian and civilized people.
- " *Sixth.* That the inhabitants of the defenceless towns, through which the contending parties indiscriminately may pass, be not injured.
- " *Seventh.* That as, by this time, every person is undeceived with regard to the true motives of this war, and it being unwarrantable to connect this contest with the cause of religion, as was attempted at the beginning, let the ecclesiastical orders abstain from prostituting their ministry, within the limits of their jurisdiction, by declamations, reproaches, or in any other way; nor ought the ecclesiastical tribunals to interfere in an affair exclusively of the state, and which does not belong to them. If they continue to act as they have heretofore done, they

will certainly disgrace their dignity, as experience daily proves, and expose their decrees and censures to the scorn, derision, and contempt of the people, who, in the mass, are anxiously wishing the success of the country: it being well understood, that, in case the clergy are not thus restrained, we feel no longer answerable for the results that may occur from the enthusiasm and indignation of the people; although, on our part, we protest, now and for ever, our profound respect and veneration for their character and jurisdiction in matters relating to their ministry.

“ *Eighth.* That, as this is a matter of the greatest importance, and concerns indiscriminately all and every inhabitant of this land, this manifesto and its propositions ought to be published, by means of the public prints of the capital, in order that the people, composed of Americans and Europeans, being informed of what so deeply interests them, may be enabled to manifest their will, which ought to be the guide of all our operations.

“ *Ninth.* That, in case none of these plans are admitted, *reprisals shall be rigorously observed.*

“ Behold here, brethren and friends, the propositions we present to you, founded on the principles of natural equity. In one hand, we offer you the olive branch; and in the other, the sword; never losing sight of those bonds by which we are united; always bearing in mind, that European blood circulates in our veins, and that the same blood which is now so fast shedding, to the great detriment of the monarchy, and for the purpose of maintaining it integral during the absence of the king, is all Spanish. What objection can you have to examine our pretensions? How can you palliate the blind obstinacy of refusing to hear us? Are we, perchance, inferior to the populace of a single town in Spain? and are you of a hierarchy superior to kings? Charles III. descended from his throne, to listen to a plebeian, who spoke in the name of the people of Madrid. To Charles IV. the tumult of Aranjuez cost no less than the abdication of his crown. Is it, then, the Americans alone, when they seek to speak to their brethren, to whom they are in every sense equal, and at a time when the king can no longer be appealed to, who are to be answered with the fire of musquetry?

“ If, now, when we address you for the last time, since we have often in vain endeavoured

to fix your attention, you refuse to admit any of our plans, at least we may rest satisfied with having proposed them, in compliance with the most sacred duties, which the good man cannot behold with indifference. In this manner shall we be justified in the eyes of the world, and posterity will not have to accuse us of irregular proceedings. But in this case, remember, there is a severe and supreme Judge, to whom, sooner or later, you will have to render an account of your operations, and of their results and enormities; of all which, henceforward, we make you answerable. Remember, that the fate of America is not decided; that the combat is not always favourable to you; and that reprisals are, at all times, most terrible. Brethren, friends, and fellow-citizens, let us embrace, and be happy, instead of mutually bringing misfortunes on our heads."

Thus did the Mexicans explain their rights, their wishes, and their loyalty: but these declarations, as well as many other attempts at pacification, were always treated by the royalists with scorn. They declared it derogatory to Spanish dignity, to treat with vile and malignant insurgents. They affected to look on the patriots as rebels, unworthy the rights of hu-

manity, threatening them with total extermination; and, during the reign of the barbarous Calleja, cruelty was clothed in its most terrific garb,—every insurgent that fell into their hands being immediately sacrificed.

Is it a matter of surprise, that, under such deep and dreadful provocations, the Mexican patriots should resort to acts of blood and retaliation? In truth, it was the only mode calculated to repress the savage atrocities of the royalists. The consequences of this retaliatory system, spread with electric rapidity through this once pacific people. Man, by daily witnessing scenes of cruelty, soon becomes callous to the feelings of humanity.

Philanthropists in their closets may deplore these excesses, and deprecate the exercise of revenge; but those only, who have been placed in the situation of beholding their families, friends, and companions, butchered in cold blood,—who have seen villages and estates laid waste by fire,—who have witnessed thousands of human beings compelled to fly for refuge among the beasts of the forest, can form an adequate conception of the imperious necessity, and even gratification, accompanying acts of retaliation.

Hidalgo and Morelos, as well as many other patriot chiefs, have given numerous proofs of

the exercise of mercy ; but rarely indeed has this virtue appeared in the conduct of the royal chiefs. Hundreds of European Spaniards are now living in Mexico, who were taken prisoners on the field of battle ; but there breathes scarcely a single insurgent, taken under similar circumstances. During the reign of the Spanish Nero, clemency was a crime ; and whenever he heard that any of his officers, in contravention of his orders, had listened to the appeals of a wretched prisoner, he ordered such officer to be dismissed or severely reprimanded, and the victim to be immediately put to death. The author was witness to a heart-rending scene of this nature.—About forty prisoners who had been captured several days after an action, and had been found in the woods *unarmed*, were pardoned by a commandant of the royalists, and had been induced by him to enlist among the royal troops. A few days after their enlistment, eight of them deserted. On receipt of this intelligence, the viceroy ordered the remaining thirty-two *to be taken from the royal ranks, and shot*. The gallant commandant refused to obey the barbarous mandate, and sent a respectful remonstrance to Calleja on the subject,—the former order was repeated ; but, in the mean time, an opportunity was



afforded the prisoners to make their escape, which they effected, with the exception of four, who were shot: the commandant was suspended from his command.—Were we to relate one third of the horrors committed by Calleja's orders, they would not only occupy too large a space in our volume, but would appear incredible to our readers. We feel great pleasure, however, in stating, that the successor of Calleja, Don Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, the present viceroy, has displayed a character the reverse of his predecessor's; and several of his officers have, on many occasions, given proofs, that a merciful spirit may be found in the breast of an European Spaniard. But such had been the sanguinary education of the officers and soldiers, and such their habitual practice of indiscriminately sacrificing the insurgent prisoners, that, on the part of the royalists, the work of extermination continued to rage with nearly the same fury as during the first three years of the revolution.

The disgraceful and barbarous mode of warfare adopted in Mexico, and which still prevails there and in South America, had its origin solely in the outrageous decrees of the Spanish government, and in the conduct of Spanish officers sent to America to execute those sangui-

nary mandates. All the offers of Hidalgo, Morelos, and other chiefs, to regulate an exchange of prisoners, and to prosecute the war according to the usages of civilized nations, were invariably treated with contempt by the royalists. Hence has resulted a growing and deadly hatred, on the part of the Americans, against European Spaniards,—an inextinguishable spirit of revenge, which suspends upon a fragile thread the life of every Spaniard in America. This is known and felt by many a Spaniard now residing in Mexico, although the government of Spain appears not yet to be sensible of the important fact. The Indians and Creoles never will, never can, forgive or forget their former grievances, and the recent cruelties which have been practised on them. It is now too late to attempt to regain the affections or homage of these people ; and Spain will ere long discover, that it is impossible to bind them with their former shackles. To suppose that the fires and eruptions of Mount Ætna might be suppressed by throwing a platform of wood over the mouth of the crater, would not be more ridiculous, than to imagine that the population of America can continue to be controlled by Spain.

In making the preceding remarks, the author has been guided by a mass of proofs derived

from personal knowledge, and by the careful perusal of authentic documents procured from royalists and patriots. The developement of these facts may excite the displeasure of the Spanish government, and wound the pride of the European Spaniard ; but we feel bound to place them before the civilized world, in justice to the much-injured inhabitants of Southern America, as well as to perform a duty as a citizen of the United States, and consequently an avowed enemy to all governments inimical to rational freedom.

To return to the operations of Morelos—After the capture of Oaxaca, the numerical strength of his army was much augmented : but, the prevalence of inattention to discipline, and the conduct of the officers, in indulging in relaxation in that luxurious climate, combined with the strange and clashing decrees of a legislative body, inexperienced as well as deficient in energy, rendered it impossible for Morelos to strike a decisive blow against the enemy. No sooner did he and his officers form any military plan, than its merits became the subject of discussion in the Mexican Congress, and thus was rendered ineffectual by delay, or became known to the enemy. The Spanish government put in motion every engine of

intrigue, to gain over to its interests part of the members of the Mexican Congress; and some intercepted despatches, which fell into the hands of the patriot chiefs, unfolded to them the weakness, or rather treachery, of several distinguished individuals of their own party. Jealousy of course ensued; confidence was shaken between the military and civil authorities; and hence originated that train of serious disasters, which will be related in the sequel.

Morelos, on learning that the royalists had retaken Valladolid, and strongly fortified it, marched to effect its reduction, without reflecting that his army was generally composed of the natives of Tierra Caliente, and consequently not adapted to carry on warfare in the cold regions. His attempt, therefore, on Valladolid was not only unsuccessful, but he lost a great number of men, and was compelled to make a precipitate retreat to the warm country.

The royalists now became animated with fresh courage, and determined on pursuing the patriot army. At the hacienda of *Puruaran*, they met a division under the command of the patriot general Matamoros. The royalists began the combat with great fury, while the patriots defended themselves with such obstinacy, that almost every individual of the division was cut

to pieces, and the general remained a prisoner in the hands of the royalists.

Matamoros was a priest, and had on several occasions displayed great valour, and more military talent than any other officer in the patriot service. It is generally believed, that if he had enjoyed the supreme command, instead of the second rank, he would have pursued a very different, and probably a more successful course, than that which Morelos had adopted.

The official despatches of the royalists, on the capture of Matamoros, evince the high opinion they entertained of him. They refused an offer made by Morelos, to exchange several Spanish officers and men, whom he then held as prisoners, for the captured general ; and although the former threatened to make a dreadful retaliation, in case Matamoros was sacrificed, yet the royalists, in despite of offers and menaces, caused him to be shot.

Morelos, after experiencing many disasters and difficulties, finding that the province of Valladolid was not a suitable theatre for his army, nor a place of security for the residence of the Mexican Congress, which then held its sessions at a place called *Ario*, resolved on transferring his head-quarters to the city of Tehuacan, in the province of La Puebla, where

the patriot chief Teran had a respectable division. With this view, he put his army in motion, taking with him the members of Congress, and a great number of women and children. We have been informed, by several persons who accompanied this expedition, that it resembled more the migration of a vast body of people, than the march of an army. The road, for several leagues, was covered with baggage waggons and mules; no order was observed on the march; and the military forces were so scattered, that, in case of attack, it would have been impracticable to form a junction with promptitude. Morelos does not appear to have made the least calculation on being assaulted: he conceived, that such was his superiority of numbers, that the royalists would not dare to molest him on his route. He continued his march, without opposition, for several days. At length he separated from the main body of his army, and reached a place called *Tepecuacuilco*, with a small division of cavalry. He there made a halt, intending to remain until his main force should come up.

The royalists, in the mean time, had gained intelligence, by means of spies, whom they had placed in Morelos' army, of all his movements; and although they had several times appeared

on his flanks and rear during the march, yet they had not shewn a disposition to bring him to action. No sooner, however, were they informed that Morelos, with his small party of cavalry, had detached himself from his main body, than they resolved to seize on the advantage thus offered to them. They accordingly pushed on, and came up with him at Tepecuacuilco. After a short combat, Morelos was taken prisoner, on the 5th of November, 1815: he was sent to Mexico, and delivered over to the Holy Office. The cities and towns in the kingdom, in possession of the royalists, gave way to the most extravagant demonstrations of joy, on the capture of the patriot chief; for they considered this event as the termination of the contest.

The Inquisition acted a conspicuous part. After declaring Morelos a *heretic*, and degrading him, that tribunal, with all its solemn forms, delivered him over to the military authority, which, in its turn, declared him a traitor, and sentenced him to be shot. The sentence was carried into effect, on the 22d of December, 1815, at *San Christoval*, in the environs of the city of Mexico.

On this occasion, there was published a document, with the signature of Morelos, in which he was represented as making a solemn recant-

ation of his errors; as exhorting his deluded countrymen to return to their allegiance to the Spanish government; and, after imploring the forgiveness of his God and his king, acknowledging the justice of the punishment he was about to suffer. There was likewise published another document, wherein he offered, that if the viceroy would grant him his life, *he would engage effectually to quell the insurrection.*

Both these documents have been declared by the patriots to be forgeries of the royalists; and, in support of this assertion, they have published some very able papers. Indeed, some of the royalists, who were present at the execution of Morelos, have had the candour to acknowledge, that he died in the most heroic manner, fervently praying for the emancipation of his country, and sternly refusing to answer any interrogatories, tending to compromise the safety, or develope the views, of the patriots.

The death of Morelos was a serious blow to the cause of his party, as he was the only one, among their chiefs, whose orders were implicitly obeyed. The forces under his command were much better organized than any other troops in the country; and they had, on several occasions, displayed great valour, particularly in the siege of *Zitacuaro*, where they gained a victory over



a superiority of numbers. The memorable siege of Acapulco, which occupied *fifteen months*, evinced the great influence that Morelos possessed over his army; for otherwise it would have been impossible, in such a climate, to induce raw troops to display so much perseverance. In fact, all the royalists, with whom the writer conversed, expressed their belief, that, had Morelos safely reached Tehuacan, and there concentrated the divisions of the other patriot chiefs, he would have been able, in a few weeks, to have destroyed any force that the royalists, at that time, could have brought against them.

In proportion as the death of Morelos excited fresh courage among the royalists, it occasioned depression and confusion among the patriots. Dissensions took place in the Mexican Congress; while, among the military chieftains, ambition to obtain the supreme command became the dominant passion. Each refused to act in concert with the other, and endeavoured to promote his separate interests at the expense of those of his country.

The royalists were not idle at this juncture. They knew that the continuance of their power depended upon keeping up this spirit of jealousy among the patriot chiefs; and they employed bribery, and every other available means,

to prevent a union of the revolutionists, well knowing, that so long as they remained scattered in divisions throughout the provinces, it would be easy to subdue them in detail.

The fatal consequences flowing from these dissensions among the patriots will be found detailed, in their proper place, in the sequel.

The members of the Mexican Congress, after the capture of Morelos, pursued their route to Tehuacan, where they arrived, and began to exercise their legislative functions, by issuing decrees, which were obeyed, or disregarded, as suited the interests or inclinations of the military commandants to whom they were addressed.

Don Manuel Mier y Teran, the commander-in-chief at Tehuacan, was viewed with a jealous eye by several members of the Congress; and he discovered their intentions to deprive him of his command. As the officers and soldiers of Teran were devoted to him, and as he conceived that he was likely to fall a victim to the intrigues of the Congress, he resolved on the bold step of dissolving that body, and of seizing the persons of the members. Accordingly, he sent a military force to the house where they were assembled, and put them all under arrest. We have seen his manifesto, in justification of this daring act; and although we do not pretend to decide

that his alleged reasons for the measure are perfectly satisfactory, yet his subsequent conduct proved that he was not guided by any views hostile to the welfare of his country. Neither does he appear to have dishonoured his character, by any act of revenge against those members of the Congress who had previously determined on his destruction; but, on the contrary, although they were completely in his power, he liberated them all, gave money to some of them, and permitted them to depart from Tehuacan, and proceed to any place they thought proper.

The dissolution of the Mexican Congress, by this arbitrary act of Teran, was, however, a fatal event to the cause of the patriots; for the military commanders, in the different provinces, no longer considering themselves subservient to any orders, openly assumed the character of independent chiefs in their respective jurisdictions. They all avowed a deadly hostility to Teran. The extraordinary character of this man, who had not only to contend against the royalists, but likewise against the machinations of his compatriots, will be described in our subsequent details of the revolution.

At the time when the revolutionary cause in Mexico assumed this gloomy and desperate aspect, the gallant Spanish general Mina was

forming a project, in London, in its favour. This brave youth had rendered eminent services to his native country, and had been a principal instrument in frustrating the designs of the emperor Napoleon with regard to Spain. In what manner his distinguished services were requited by the ungrateful Ferdinand, the following chapter will explain.

Prior to Mina's departure from London, he had received some accounts of the disasters in Mexico, which we have briefly noticed : but, so far from his ardour being damped by the unpropitious intelligence, it appeared to furnish him with new incentives to resume his deeds of hardihood and valour, in the cause of an oppressed people. The constancy of this high-minded Spaniard, struggling with obstacles almost insurmountable, has rarely been equalled—never excelled.

The reader will find, in the annexed biographical sketch of Mina, and in the relation of his daring exploits in Mexico, the portrait of a hero worthy of occupying, on the page of history, a distinguished rank among the martyrs of liberty.

## CHAPTER III.

*General Mina—His early life, and career in Spain—His motives for embarking in the cause of Mexico—Arrival at, and transactions in Baltimore—Departure of the Expedition—Occurrences at Port au Prince—Arrival of the Expedition at Galveston—Treachery of Correa—Departure of the Expedition from Galveston, and its arrival off the bar of the River Santander—Disembarkation of the Division.*

**DON XAVIER MINA** was born in the month of December, 1789. He was the eldest son of a well-born and respected proprietary, whose domains lay near the town of Monreal, in the kingdom of Navarre. Brought up among the mountains of his native province, he was accustomed to wander through their rich valleys, and to pursue the chase amidst the grandeur of the Pyrenees. His faculties, thus nurtured and exercised, expanded themselves at an early period, while his mind imbibed all the energy of an unconquerable boldness. The wild aspect, the rugged scenery of an Alpine country, and the cheerful and buoyant feelings they ex-

cite, are well known to have a powerful effect upon the formation of character. It is there that the simple mountaineer, removed from the influence of the refinements of society, escapes its corruption; and we find the elevated valley "dignified as the abode of bravery and virtue." It is there, that the elements of great and noble daring are cherished; that patriotism is a feeling of spontaneous growth; and thence have sprung those heroic spirits, whose exalted deeds have shed a lustre on humanity.

The early studies of Mina were pursued at Pampeluna and at Zaragoza. In 1808, at the commencement of the resistance of the Spaniards to the French invasion, he was a student in the university of Zaragoza. At that period, between eighteen and nineteen years of age, he felt the strong enthusiasm of the times. When the massacre at Madrid, of the 2d of May, shook all Spain, and the cry of vengeance was heard from the Ebro to the Guadiana, he abandoned his studies, joined the army of the north of Spain as a volunteer, and was present at the battles of Alcornes, Maria, and Belchite. The events of that period are still fresh in our remembrance — the general rising of the Spanish nation, and the awakening of the heroism of the Spanish people from the slumber in

which it had been spell-bound since the days of Charles V.

Irritated by the capture of his armies, Napoleon, at this time, began to pour fresh troops into Spain ; and it became particularly important to the Spaniards to have a communication with France, as the means of procuring intelligence. The gallant young Mina undertook the enterprise. Availing himself of his knowledge of the country, the peasantry, and the passes of the mountains, he executed it with complete success ; establishing a secret communication with the provinces of France adjacent to the Pyrenees, by which much valuable information of what was passing in France was obtained by the Spanish generals.

The Spanish armies, however, were unable to cope with the numerous and veteran troops with which Napoleon overspread the country ; and, being defeated in every regular encounter, they retreated before the French.

The Catalonian army, after the defeat at Belchite, a town to the southward of Zaragoza, fell back to Tortosá, while the French occupied a line extending, in the direction of the southern frontier of Arragon, into Catalonia.

It was in this gloomy situation of affairs, that Xavier Mina formed a determination, which

had the most important effects, not only upon his own fortune in life, but upon the whole war in Spain. He resolved to pass through the line of the French position, and, gaining his native province of Navarre, to make its mountains and fastnesses the theatre of his hostile operations; to hang on the rear of the invaders; to intercept their convoys and couriers, and to cut off their straggling detachments.

In an evening walk he first communicated, to a friend and kinsman, his plans and schemes; and unfolded, with enthusiasm, his hopes and fears, and visions of glory. His kinsman heard him to the end in silence; and then, pointing to a gibbet which stood near, "If you succeed, it will be great: if you fail, there is your portion," was his reply. In answer to his solicitation to be permitted to put his plans in execution, the Spanish general told him it would only be throwing away his life, as he would be cut off from the army. "*I do not,*" said Mina, "*think I am cut off, so long as I can find a path for my horse.*" Finally, he left Tortosá with *twelve men*, and, passing with skill through the line occupied by the French army, arrived in Navarre. Of those twelve, one is at present a lieutenant; another has retired with nine wounds; and the rest fell in battle.



The first attempt of Mina was upon a small guard of a dozen French. He attacked them with about twenty men, and captured them without much resistance. The next was on a party of thirty men. The Spaniards, who had nearly the same number, lay concealed behind a stone wall; upon the approach of the enemy, they rose and fired. In the contest which ensued, a tall grenadier fired at Mina with deliberate aim, and, taking shelter behind a tree, encouraged his party. But the Spaniards, leaping the wall, rushed on, and settled the combat with their sabres. This successful beginning produced the most important results. The spirits of the peasantry were roused; many successful adventures took place; the French foraging parties were cut to pieces; their convoys attacked and plundered; and their couriers intercepted. The Spanish government had scarcely finished their rejoicing for the first successes of Mina, when they were again surprised by his sending them a large body of prisoners, among whom was a lieutenant-colonel; and, at another time, *seven hundred* prisoners, with a quantity of military equipments, stores, and money.

The French were not passive spectators of these chivalrous exploits. Upwards of thirty

individuals, nearly or remotely connected with Mina's family, were suddenly arrested, and sent into France. War, with all the meliorations introduced by modern civilization, is sufficiently terrible to a reflecting mind ; but it is in those political struggles, where the relations and kindred of an individual are made answerable for his opinions and acts, that it comes armed with its severest afflictions. Among the relatives of Mina, thus torn from their country, was an accomplished young lady, the object of his early attachment. Separated from each other, time, and the waves of an adverse fortune, bore them still farther asunder, and their mutual affection, the sport of this cruel destiny, was overwhelmed and lost for ever.

Repeated expeditions were undertaken to destroy Mina ; but the affections of every peasant being with him, and having correct intelligence of every movement, he was enabled, not only to baffle and elude his enemy, but frequently coming on them by surprise, to defeat and destroy his pursuers. When he found their forces too numerous to be openly resisted, he appointed a place of rendezvous, dispersed his band, and, separating from each other, they eluded pursuit. The armed mountaineers retired to their homes, or to secret recesses, and

there waited till their leader gave the signal ; when, suddenly re-appearing, they seemed to spring from the earth, like the men of Cadmus, a legion of soldiers. Mina, with a select band, the nucleus of his army, retired to the mountains. A hill, near his father's mansion, was his principal retreat. He was familiar with its fastnesses, and solitary recesses ; and the neglected flocks of his own family furnished him and his brave companions with food. When he determined on striking a blow, he gathered his forces, like a tempest on the mountain-top, and, descending in terror, swept the province to the very gates of Pampeluna.

In this manner was begun the insurrection in the province of Navarre. From this period, bands of guerillas were organized throughout the country. Thus commenced that system, which was the great means of keeping up the spirit of desperate animosity, and which became, eventually, the principal means of delivering Spain from her invaders. The accounts of Mina's successes ran through the country, and produced a powerful excitement in the minds of the people. He was thence soon enabled to raise a respectable division of troops, whose numbers were increased by the peasantry, whenever it was contemplated to strike a blow.

The central junta of Seville conferred on him the rank of colonel, and, soon after, the dignity of commandant-general of Navarre. The junta of Arragon also appointed him commanding general of Upper Arragon. He won these honours most gallantly by his sword, in a gloomy and desperate hour; they were confirmed to him by his country; and he continued his brilliant career, lighting up an hostility and daring resistance, which has made the French invasion of Spain one of the most remarkable events in the history of modern Europe.

In the winter of 1810-11, Mina was directed by the Spanish government to destroy, if possible, an iron foundry near Pampeluna, from which the French were supplied with a number of articles for the service of the war. Whether it was from one of those accidents which no prudence can foresee, or that the enemy had obtained information of his movements, this unfortunate enterprise was fatal to Mina. Two strong bodies of French troops, on their march in contrary directions, arrived at the same time at the two entrances of a narrow valley. Mina and his corps, who were then in the defile, were completely inclosed. The fight that ensued was obstinate and bloody. The gallant Mina, defending himself with his sword, fell, pierced

with wounds, a prisoner, into the hands of the enemy.

Thus ended the rapid but brilliant career of Xavier Mina in Spain. Fortune, as if jealous of the skill and heroism which threatened to raise him above her capricious favours, played him false at last. But the spirit he had raised was still alive; the rage of his warrior mountaineers was kindled, and they chose one of his family to lead them to revenge. His uncle *Espoz* was the chief whom they selected, and he proved himself worthy of so high a trust. He stands first among those, whose names are chaunted through Spain, in the hymns of triumph of a delivered people. He watched faithfully through the dark and perilous night, which overhung his country; and when the morning of her deliverance broke, *Espoz* was seen chasing the last Frenchman from Spain. But let not the full glory of the uncle diminish that of the nephew. Xavier Mina was less fortunate, but not less deserving, than *Espoz*. *Ego feci, tulit alter honores*. It was Xavier, who first taught the mountaineers of his province where to strike at the invader, and gave system to their irregular valour. He encouraged, by his successes, the Spaniards to follow his daring example; he braved the terrors of Napoleon's

vengeance; and opened, with his sword, the path which led to the deliverance of his country. He was not one and twenty when taken prisoner. What might not have been expected from this heroic youth, if his career had been continued?

Mina was taken to Paris, after his capture, and shut up in the castle of Vincennes. The afflictions, which press upon the unfortunate state prisoner, were aggravated to him, by the care with which all intelligence of the fate of his relations and struggling country was concealed from him. His hair fell off, and his person was completely changed. In time, however, the rigours of his imprisonment were softened, and books were given to him. He applied himself, with great industry, to the study of the military art, in which he derived great assistance from some of the veteran officers who were his fellow-prisoners. He remained in Vincennes till the allied armies entered France; nor was he set at liberty until the general peace, which took place upon the abdication of the emperor Napoleon.

It is well known, that king Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, was met by a deputation, bearing for his approval the constitution under which Spain had been governed during the

captivity of the king—a constitution that was founded on the basis of a meliorated and limited monarchy. It was formed to meet the liberal opinions of enlightened Spaniards, and those changes which the age, and modern ideas, demanded. One, out of the many instances of this melioration, may be cited from article No. 304, which forever abolishes all confiscation of the property of the person condemned for crimes against the state; and the humane reason assigned is, that confiscation is a punishment of the innocent children, and not of the criminal. Nor will the merit of this distinction be fully appreciated, until we reflect that there is scarcely a state or kingdom in Europe, in which the contrary doctrine is not held.

The conduct of Ferdinand, on his return to Spain, is well known to the world. The sympathies of the liberal and enlightened, once so strong in his favour, in every country, have been destroyed by the persecution of the Cortes, and the proscription of the patriot leaders; by the prohibition of foreign books and journals; by the destruction of the opening sources of national improvement; and by the revival of the Inquisition, with its demon train of judicial murders and midnight tortures. The dungeons of the Holy Office—the fortifications and galleys,

in which soldiers of honour were condemned to work with the vilest criminals—and the list of banishments, confiscations, and executions, forcibly shew, in what manner bigotry and political interest will destroy the most generous feelings, and sanction the vilest ingratitude.

Being conspicuous members of the party of *Liberales*, or *Constitutionalists*, the two Minas soon experienced the displeasure of the court, and the frowns of the king. Xavier, however, was offered the command of the military forces in Mexico, a situation next to that of the viceroy of New Spain. He declined it; and, being apprehensive of the consequences, retired into Navarre. Espoz y Mina, who still remained at the head of his mountain warriors in Navarre, immediately received an order, depriving him of his command. Matters being thus brought to a crisis, it was determined by the two Minas to raise the standard of the Cortes and the constitution. They had no time to form any extensive plan. It was agreed to strike immediately, before the order depriving Espoz of his command should be publicly known. The details of this bold attempt are interesting, and present some features of romance; but we can only glance slightly at them. While Espoz was to put his troops in motion, that he might arrive,



at a concerted hour, under the walls of Pampe-  
luna, Xavier Mina entered the fortress. There,  
he soon communicated with a few officers, who  
were known to him, and whose sentiments were  
favourable to the Cortes. Popular in the  
whole Spanish army, and his name endeared to  
those soldiers of freedom, he selected a few of  
them to be his guests at a convivial banquet.  
After supper, as the time drew nigh, Mina rose  
up suddenly amidst them; addressed them in  
a nervous and enthusiastic harangue; unfolded  
the ingratitude and injustice of the court; and,  
finally, exhorted them to give the blessings of  
freedom to the country they had saved. The  
effect was electric and complete. They arose,  
and crossing their swords, as they stood around  
the banqueting table, swore to be faithful.  
The sentinels on the appointed bastion were  
withdrawn; the ladders were fixed; and, from  
the dead of night, almost till the dawn, they  
waited, with breathless anxiety, the approach  
of the troops under Espoz y Mina. Had they  
then arrived, a new æra, pregnant with im-  
portant events, would have opened on Spain.

The causes which led to the failure of this  
enterprise were partly accidental, and implicate  
the policy, not the bravery, of Espoz. It is now  
understood, that the troops, instead of being

excited and stimulated for such an occasion, by his orders were rigidly kept from liquor and refreshment. They were altogether ignorant of the reason and nature of an expedition, so strange to them, in time of peace; and, after marching till a late hour in the night, they began to murmur. Some confusion arose in a corps whose commander was unpopular; the march was delayed; a nocturnal tumult ensued; and the soldiers lay down in scattered parties in the fields, or wandered in search of refreshments. Espoz, who had rode on a-head, found, on his return, in the darkness of the night, a scene of confusion, to remedy which all his exertions were baffled. It was irremediable, and the opportunity was lost. The confederates in Pampluna speedily received the fatal intelligence, and immediately quitted the fortress.

Although the Spaniards are accustomed to obedience, and "the king's name is a tower of strength," yet, on this occasion, they scorned to do any injury to their generals. Xavier Mina traversed the whole province in safety, collected all those friends whom he thought might be compromised by his attempt, and entered France in full uniform, with thirty officers. He was arrested by the orders of the French government, and imprisoned near Bayonne; but was after-

wards liberated, and passed over to England. From the British government he received a liberal pension—we believe, two thousand pounds sterling per annum.

During his stay in England, he was treated by several eminent personages with flattering attentions; but particularly by an English nobleman, alike distinguished for his attachment to the cause of freedom throughout the world, and his urbanity to strangers. By this nobleman, Mina was made acquainted with General Scott, of the army of the United States, then on a visit to England. He was also furnished with a ship, arms, and military stores, by some English gentlemen attached to the cause of freedom, to enable him to prosecute an enterprise he had been some time meditating, against the kingdom of Mexico, as the quarter whence the most severe blow could be struck against the tyranny of Ferdinand.

Mina, in drawing his sword in favour of the independence of Mexico, considered he was espousing a cause consonant with those sacred principles for which he became an exile. Power and place might have been his, if he had chosen to float in the eddy of court favour; but his character and principles forbade him. He believed, with many philosophers of the last

century, and with some of the enlightened men of his own country, that the treasures of the New World had a fatal effect on the prosperity and glory of Spain; he cannot, therefore, be justly accused of doing a wilful injury to his own country. Nor did he owe allegiance to the ungrateful Ferdinand. An exile, cut off from every tie, by the act of a sovereign who had set a price upon his head, there was no longer any ligament to bind him to the throne of Ferdinand, nor any rule, even in the forgotten code of villainage, to forbid his embarking in the glorious cause of the emancipation of Mexico. He did not, like Coriolanus, league with his country's enemies, nor, like Eugene, devote himself to a foreign court. Defeated in his attempt to uphold the Cortes, and the cause of Spanish freedom in Europe, he devoted himself to the cause of liberty in America. He boldly entered on a dangerous and desperate path of toil, bearing in his view the prospect of that fate, which once menaced Hancock and Washington, and which overtook Fitzgerald and Emmett.

The pretensions of Spain to the dominion and rule of the vast regions of the New World, are too lofty and extravagant for the jurists of the nineteenth century. The time has gone by,

when the decrees of the court of Madrid, and the bulls of a Pope, are to be obeyed and worshipped as infallible mandates, by sixteen millions of the human race, on the continent of America. Spain has, it is true, by a watchful jealousy, by the discouragement of learning, of commerce, and of improvement, by a persecuting hierarchy, and by the dreadful tribunal of the Inquisition, bound the inhabitants of Spanish America in strong fetters. But, the voice of that spirit which echoed along the Allegany in 1776, has already been heard on the Table Land of Mexico, is now rolling among the Andes, and will, ere long, break the chains of servitude for ever.

We are aware, that many circumstances, which gave a peculiar character to the contest of the North American colonies for independence, do not exist with regard to the South Americans. The English and Spanish colonies were planted in a manner as widely different, as the characters of Cortez and Pizarro were from those of Sir Walter Raleigh and William Penn. On the basis of equal laws, trial by jury, liberty of person, conscience, and speech, a beautiful fabric of society had been erected in the British American colonies; and the declaration of independence was the Corinthian

capital, which decorated and finished the columns of the temple.

The revolutions in Spanish America, on the contrary, are at this moment affording a signal proof of the effect of early dispositions implanted in nations, and perhaps (although the opinion may not be in accordance with the sentiments of some modern philosophers) of the punishment which national crime prepares for posterity. The predictions of the benevolent and venerable Las Casas have already been fulfilled. A desolating civil war has acquired, from the oppression of a tyrannic government, and the cruel disposition which has been encouraged in the mass of the people, uncommon features of horror. The frequent refusal of quarter, the sacrifice of persons in cold blood, the proscription and destruction of whole districts, the mutilations and butchery of females and children, avenge, terribly avenge the sufferings of the simple and peaceable aborigines, as well as the outrages under which the Creoles have been so long groaning.

It is a political fact, now admitted to be true in its utmost extent, that the government of Spain, over her American colonies, was worse than any other recorded in the page of history. In vain have her apologists referred us to the

ponderous volumes of "*Las Leyes de las Indias*," or to her ecclesiastical regulations, for proofs of her moderation and wisdom. We have an unerring and melancholy proof, in the past and present condition of society in those regions, of the pestilential influence of the Spanish government. It has, in every way, tended to awe, to depress, and to brutalize the people ; to cut off all means of improvement ; to destroy in its infancy every germ of melioration ; and to deprive them of the many physical blessings which their great country afforded them.

In the vast empire of New Spain, containing nearly seven millions of people, there is but one public journal, and that newspaper is printed under the immediate control of a vigilant and jealous government. No foreign or domestic intelligence is ever inserted in this paper, but such as comports with the spirit and policy of the government. In this state of wretchedness and ignorance has the great mass of society been kept, in Spanish America, for near three hundred years. A great change, however, has taken place within the last ten years ; and every friend of humanity must rejoice, that the emancipation of South America and Mexico, from Spanish thralldom, is an event now no longer doubtful. It may be retarded to a period more

distant than many sanguine friends of the cause suppose ; but every day unfolds new evidences, not only of the impracticability of Spain ever re-subjugating such of the colonies as are already in open revolt, but also of the very precarious tenure on which she holds her dominion over certain sections that still acknowledge her sovereignty.

This important fact will be more clearly developed in the following narrative of Mina's expedition ; and although the gallant youth and his brave companions have been sacrificed, they have perished in a noble cause. We shall demonstrate, by a plain statement of the extraordinary circumstances relating to that expedition, that had Mina landed with fifteen hundred or two thousand soldiers, instead of *two hundred and seventy*, in any part of the Mexican kingdom, he could have marched direct upon the city of Mexico, and overturned the Spanish government almost without a struggle. We are aware, that this assertion will surprise those who are uninformed of the character and feelings of the Mexican people ; and we are likewise aware, that the truths we are about to develop, will be a source of mortification to the pride of the Spanish government ; but, be that as it may, we pledge ourselves for the fidelity of the nar-



ration, and leave the intelligent reader to draw his own conclusions.

General Mina had originally intended, and made his arrangements, to proceed direct to the Mexican coast, conceiving that the inhabitants generally would rise in his favour ; but, altering his plan a short time previous to his departure, in consequence of a part of his plans in Europe being frustrated, and some information that he received from a respectable source, he sailed from England, for the Chesapeake, in the month of May, 1816, accompanied by thirteen Spanish and Italian, and two English officers.

After a passage of forty-six days, the ship arrived in Hampton Roads. The general disembarked at Norfolk, whence he proceeded by land to Baltimore, at which city the ship arrived on the 3d of July. Mina here made an arrangement for a fast-sailing brig, pierced for guns, and purchased a quantity of field and battering artillery, mortars, ammunition, clothing, and military stores of every description. While these preparations were making, the ship was put in a state for the accommodation of passengers ; and the general visited Philadelphia and New York, where several Americans and Europeans volunteered their services, as officers, to accompany him. He was not desirous of

augmenting his force, except as to officers, being under the impression, as before remarked, that he should be joined by the natives on landing in Mexico. He obtained every possible information of the state of things in that country; and ascertained, that a small place on the Mexican coast, to the northward of Vera Cruz, called *Boquilla de Piedras*, was fortified, and still held by the patriot general *Don Guadalupe Victoria*. He also learned, that, although the patriots had met with recent disasters, yet they still maintained several strong guerilla parties in the different provinces.

In the mean time, many attempts were made, by the representative of the Spanish government, to destroy the expedition. During the passage from England, some of the Spanish officers had a dispute with the general; four of whom, on their arrival in the United States, presented themselves to Don Luis de Onis, the Spanish minister, and gave such information as they possessed, relative to the general's intended operations. Although their communications were crude, enough was imparted to awaken the jealousy and suspicion of the minister; who, ever on the alert to support the dignity and interest of his master Ferdinand, immediately addressed the American government, represent-

ing the nature of the information he had received, and calling upon it to suppress the threatened undertaking of Mina: but, as the complaints of the minister were not sustained by any positive data, and as the existing laws did not prohibit the exportation of military stores, nor the sailing of American vessels to any part of the world in amity with the United States, for commercial objects; and as the rights of hospitality were alike extended to all parties; the executive did not think proper to interfere, as long as the general and his agents moved within the sphere of the laws of the republic.

The Spanish consul at Baltimore, having become acquainted with the intended object of the ship from the steward, who ran away from her, and who, understanding Spanish, had overheard the conversation of the malcontents on the voyage, applied to the British consul for his official assistance in ridding the Spanish government of this cause of its alarm. It is yet doubtful, in the mind of the writer, whether the Spanish representative surpassed the British consul, in this instance, in strenuous exertions in the cause of Ferdinand VII. He ostensibly attached more credit to the bare *ipse dixit* of a worthless deserter, than to the papers and documents of

the ship ; and, without any other proof that her destination was illicit, than that of the assertions of known mutineers, he, of himself, unjustifiably assumed a high jurisdiction in a neutral country, whose government had withheld its interference ; and, although the ship had not been employed in any respect in contravention to the British laws, and it could not be established that it was intended that she should be so employed while she bore a British flag, he endeavoured to throw obstacles in the way of her voyage. In fact, the British consul acted, in this business, more like the representative of the Spanish, than the consul of a free government ; and, at all events, it indicated his hostility to the cause of liberty in Spanish America.

A quantity of military stores were put on board the ship, as cargo ; and the passengers, destined to embark in her, being in readiness, she took from the custom-house a clearance for St. Thomas, and proceeded outside of Fort M'Henry, where she anchored : but it was not without some difficulty that the British consul was induced, even then, to relinquish his hold on the papers.

On the evening of the 28th of August, the passengers, in number about two hundred, embarked, under the direction of Colonel the Count

de Ruuth. Mina remained to go out in the brig, whose cargo was not quite ready. The ship was ordered to proceed to Port au Prince, there to await the arrival of the general.

The ship left the capes of Virginia on the 1st of September, in company with a Spanish schooner, which had been hired by Mina, and on board of which was Lieutenant-Colonel Myers, of the artillery, with his company; but, a night or two after sailing, this vessel separated from the ship, and proceeded to the rendezvous.

After a passage of seventeen days, the ship arrived at Port au Prince, where she found her consort the schooner. The following night, the island was visited by one of those destructive hurricanes common to the West Indies. Amid the scene of general havoc, the ship sustained her portion of damage. She parted one of her cables, drove with another a-head, and got foul of a Haytian frigate, of thirty-two guns; in consequence of which, the foremast, maintopmast, and several spars, were carried away, besides considerable injury being sustained in the hull; and the frigate lost her three masts by the board. The ship, however, hooking the frigate's moorings, held on; and about three o'clock the gale abated. Day-light offered to view the melancholy scene of the ship dismasted,

and the schooner, her consort, upset and grounded on a shoal.

The storm having abated, the passengers were landed in the course of the forenoon ; and the ship was then hauled into the inner harbour. The misfortune which had befallen her bore a serious aspect, it being feared that it would be impracticable to repair her : these apprehensions were, however, soon relieved, by the generous conduct of the late president of the republic, by whom spars were furnished, the use of the arsenal granted, and every facility afforded.

The brig being ready for sea, the general and staff embarked, and sailed from Baltimore, on the 27th of September. During his stay in that city, the simplicity and modesty of his demeanour, the honesty of his transactions, and his gentlemanly deportment, had gained him the esteem of a considerable portion of its society. He was applied to, while in the United States, to lend his assistance to the equipping of South American privateers ; and, though the offer was highly advantageous, he refused it with indignation : " What reason," said he, " have you to suppose that Xavier Mina would plunder his unoffending countrymen ? I war against Ferdinand and tyranny, not against Spaniards."

While the ship was refitting, General Mina

arrived at Port au Prince. Although he was much chagrined by the late disaster, and the delay and expense resulting therefrom; yet, by his activity and perseverance, he soon surmounted this first obstacle to his expedition. He was received with particular attention by General Petion, who afforded him every assistance in his power.

In this place, several individuals, both Americans and Europeans, abandoned the expedition. In some few instances, they were prevented from accompanying it by sickness; but the majority of them assigned reasons, in extenuation of their conduct, which should have been seriously considered before they volunteered. Mina viewed their defection with merited disregard; observing, that he wished none to follow his fortunes, but such as would voluntarily and cheerfully devote themselves to the cause of liberty. This loss was, however, in some measure counterbalanced by the acquisition of some seamen, who had deserted from a French frigate then lying in the roads.

The general had understood, that Commodore Aury, a patriot naval commander was cruising in the Bay of Mexico, and that he had formed an establishment on the island of San Luis, at the mouth of the river La Trinidad. Thither

he determined to repair, under the expectation that his views would be promoted by that officer. Having engaged a small schooner, in lieu of the Spanish vessel which had upset during the late hurricane, and the ship being refitted in the best possible manner, the expedition, consisting of the brig, ship, and schooner, on the 24th of October, made sail for the island of San Luis, on the Mexican coast.

Misfortune seems to have accompanied the expedition, from the date of the ship's arrival at Hayti. After leaving Port au Prince, an almost continual calm was experienced, so that the expedition was thirty days in performing a voyage, which, with the usual sea breeze in those latitudes, could have been made in ten or twelve. The tediousness of the voyage was, however, a light evil, compared with others which the expedition was doomed to suffer. That dreadful contagion, the yellow fever, broke out on board the ship. It had been brought from the shore by one of the passengers, who died a few days after sailing. The infection spread to the other vessels. The brig, not being crowded, suffered little, losing only one man. The ship's sick list was soon swelled to fifty and sixty daily: however, not more than seven or eight died. But on board the schooner,



where the air was confined, a melancholy scene ensued: of the few on board, eight died, among whom was Lieutenant-Colonel Daly. At last, the brig was obliged to take her in tow, as there was not an individual on board free from the fever, except a black woman. Indeed, had it not been for the exertions of an excellent physician, it is probable the expedition would have been destroyed. This worthy man, Dr. John Hennessy, formerly of Kingston, Jamaica, did not merely give evidence of his professional skill; but his indefatigable activity, and sympathizing attentions, were unremitting, and endeared him to every individual of the expedition. The vessels arrived at the Grand Cayman island, where a plentiful supply of turtle was procured; which, together with cool northerly breezes, soon rendered the passengers convalescent. At this island, those who were on board the schooner represented to the general, that it was impossible for them to proceed any farther in that ill-fated vessel. Orders were therefore given, that such as were reported to be free from fever, should be passed on board the ship; while the schooner, with her sick, went into the Grand Cayman.

The ship and brig proceeded on their course, and arrived off the encampment at San Luis, on the 24th of November, after a distressing passage of thirty days.

The general here met with Commodore Aury; and, as the north winds, which render the Mexican coast very dangerous, then prevailed, an order was given for the landing of the expedition. As there was not sufficient water on the bar to admit the vessels, measures were taken to unload them; and an old hulk, lying in the harbour, was appropriated, by the commodore, for the reception of the stores.

The settlement, called Galvezton, was established on the east end of the island. The entrance into the harbour is defended by a bar, capable of admitting vessels of easy draft, there being twelve feet of water on it; but the swell often renders the channel dangerous. Inside the bar, there is a good depth of water, up to the settlement; but the bay, into which the river La Trinidad disembogues itself, is in many parts very shoal. The island is low; and the water, which is obtained by digging in the sand, is brackish: plenty of good water may, however, be obtained in the cane brakes, at some distance from Galvezton, where the shipping usually fill their casks. The island is intersected by large bays. It is covered with long prairie grass, and abounds with deer and wild fowls; while the bay yields fine fish, and the bayous excellent oysters.

As soon as the troops were landed, an encampment was laid out, and the tents were pitched. On the west side of Galvezton, Commodore Aury had commenced throwing up a mud fort; and to the westward of this was Mina's encampment. The requisite arms were served out; two field-pieces and two howitzers were landed, and the engineer department was diligently employed in preparing fixed ammunition: the mechanics were set to work; clothing was served out to the men, and the officers were furnished with their respective uniforms. The commodore supplied the division with rations of excellent fresh bread, salt beef, pork, fish, oil, and brandy; which, with the game, and the supplies brought by the coasters, enabled the division to fare well.

In the mean time, the ship and brig, as it was unsafe to keep them at anchorage on the coast, had been ordered to proceed to New Orleans.

The immediate attention of the general was directed to the organization of his regiments. Officers were appointed to the different corps, which it was expected would be filled up soon after the descent should be made. The American officers, who did not understand the Spanish language, were formed into a company,

styled "The Guard of Honour of the Mexican Congress," of which the general was captain, a colonel, the lieutenant, and so on. Colonel Young, an officer who had distinguished himself in the service of the United States, and whose gallantry and activity we shall have occasion hereafter to notice, was subsequently placed in command of this company. The numbers of the expedition being few, this arrangement was made, both with the view to self-defence, and to keep the officers united; the general intending to transfer them to other corps, as they acquired a knowledge of the Spanish language, in which the chaplain of the division commenced instructing them. In fact, all the measures of the general clearly proved that he perfectly knew how to order his little force to the best advantage. The following was the organization of the corps:—

*Guard of Honour*—Colonel Young.

*Artillery*—Colonel Myers.

*Cavalry*—Colonel the Count de Ruuth.

*First Regiment of the Line*—Major Sarda.

*Engineer*

*Commissariat*

*Medical*

} Departments.

*Blacksmiths, Carpenters, Printers, and*

*Tailors.*

The infant army was daily exercised, and the greatest good order prevailed.

The general had frequent interviews with Commodore Aury, and was very desirous of establishing a cordial understanding with him. Unfortunately, this was not effected; and thereby Mina lost an important accession to his force, as the commodore had actually raised a body of two hundred troops, for the purpose of invading the province of Texas.

Aury held a commission in the service of the Mexican republic, as governor of the province of Texas, and general in the Mexican republican army. This commission had been granted him by *Don José Manuel de Herrera*, who resided in New Orleans, as ambassador to the United States from the Mexican republic. Herrera had been appointed by the Mexican Congress, at the period when there volution was in its most flourishing state; when General Morelos, the distinguished patriot chief, had taken Acapulco, subdued the province of Oaxaca, and established his authority over a considerable part of the Mexican empire. The right, therefore, of Herrera to appoint Aury an officer in the Mexican republic, cannot be questioned.

Herrera was a priest, grave in his manners;

but he possessed very little knowledge of the world, and consequently was easily imposed on. During his stay at New Orleans, he rendered no effectual services to the Mexican cause, except by some trifling shipments of arms and munitions of war, which he sent to General Victoria.

Previous to General Mina's sailing from Baltimore, a fast-sailing schooner had been despatched for the Mexican coast, to ascertain the situation of affairs, and to open a communication with General Victoria, who, it was understood, had a considerable patriot force under his orders, in the province of Vera Cruz, and held a small fort on the coast, at a place called *Boquilla de Piedras*. This mission was entrusted to Doctor Mier, a native of the internal provinces, and in whom the general placed great confidence.

The doctor, however, was alarmed at the stormy weather he experienced in the gulf, and put into New Orleans: from thence he despatched the schooner for Boquilla. On her arrival there, the captain found that the post was in the hands of the royalists, and he repaired to Galvezton. Information was afterwards received, that Victoria had taken a port to the northward of Boquilla, called Nautla. The

schooner was despatched for the latter place, with letters from Mina for Victoria; but, in the mean time, the place had been retaken, and on her arrival the captain found the Spanish flag flying.

Mina deeply regretted that he could not open a communication with Victoria, because he was perfectly aware of his merits, and felt the importance of acting in concert with him. If Mina could have formed a junction with Victoria, and safely landed the arms and munitions of war which he had then at his command, it would have opened a new era in the revolution; he could then have penetrated through the province of Vera Cruz to Tehuacan, formed a union with the forces of Teran, Osourno, and the other patriot chiefs, and, in all human probability, would have been able to strike a decisive blow against the royalists. The non-execution of this part of Mina's plans may be assigned as one of the causes of the eventual failure of his undertaking.

Doctor Mier, hearing of the general's arrival at Galvezton, left New Orleans, and repaired to that place. The doctor was a man of most amiable manners; and, although he had been educated a priest, was liberal in his sentiments, a good scholar, and an ardent advocate for the

emancipation of his country from the despotism of Spain. He was not, however, calculated to ride in the whirlwind of a revolution, being naturally timid; but, from his general knowledge of New Spain, and his influence in society, the general calculated much on his services, and was sincerely attached to him.

The doctor had been one of the victims of Spanish bigotry, in consequence of having delivered a discourse, in the city of Mexico, in which he undertook to prove that the famous story of the *Virgin of Guadalupe* was an imposture of the priesthood. For this act of free thinking and speaking, he was shut up for several years in the dungeons of the Inquisition, and was afterwards sent to Rome. There, by his talents, and the urbanity of his manners, he became a favourite with the Pope. Upon the breaking out of the revolution in Spain, he went there, and preached destruction to its invaders; but, being a zealous constitutionalist, he was forced to take refuge in England. There he met Mina, and most cordially engaged to accompany him to Mexico.

Having mentioned the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe, and as it is one among the numerous evidences of the superstition which has so long prevailed in Spanish America,



It may not be amiss to give some detail of the origin of this apparition. We know, from authentic records, that the superstitious terrors instilled by the Spanish priests into the minds of the ignorant aborigines, were, at the commencement of the conquest, of much more service to the government of Spain than its arms. The images and pictures of saints, which the priests had previously buried, or hidden in places where they might easily be found by the Indians, are at this day to be seen in almost every village and town in the empire. The discovery of those images is ascribed to the interposition of heaven. Every town has its tutelar saint, upon which are lavished immense sums of money, in dresses, gold and silver ornaments, diamonds, and other precious stones. To all of these the Padres have given names, and to each one is attributed miraculous powers by the credulous Indians, and indeed by many bigoted Creoles. The holy tribunal has most studiously cherished this superstition, and has hurled its thunders against him who dared to question the sacred origin of these images. It would fill volumes, were we to attempt to detail the astonishing circumstances attending these discoveries, and the miraculous virtues ascribed to each saint. They have been

transmitted from one generation to another, and have received so many embellishments and confirmations from the crafty and credulous (the latter of whom imagine, that the surest way of propitiating the favour, is to magnify the powers of the saint), that even some of the priests of better judgment have been led to believe in those wonderful attributes, and are ready to testify to miracles performed by virtue of their prayers and supplications. It is true, that many of the crafty priests are aware of the deception ; but, nevertheless, they find it expedient to compose books for the express purpose of proving the time and manner in which those great miracles have been performed ; and in so doing, they conceive, that not only their own interests are promoted, but that it is the most effectual mode of preserving the power of the church, and the dignity of the Spanish monarchy. Books of the kind just mentioned form almost the only species of literature that is allowed to circulate through the empire. They are sought after with avidity by the unfortunate Creole, and make an impression on his mind not easily eradicated.

About ten years after what the Spaniards call the Conquest, the celebrated apparition of the

Virgin of Guadalupe made its appearance, in the following manner. Adjacent to the city of Mexico is a barren hill; an Indian, accidentally passing near it, heard sounds of music, and at the same time saw an aerial figure. Alarmed at the vision, he fled; but, passing near the same place shortly afterwards, the same strange occurrence again took place. He was called by name, and told to repair to that spot at a certain time, and he would find her picture buried under a heap of roses. He did so, and found it as was said. The Indian carried this mysterious picture to the bishop of Mexico, who was, of course, in the secret. A solemn conclave of the clergy took place; and the bishop, kneeling before the picture with the most profound veneration, named it *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. A sanctuary was erected for her reception, and she received the exalted title of Patroness of Mexico, which she enjoys to the present time. This is the origin of the Virgin of Guadalupe, conformably to the records of the church now existing in Mexico. The original picture is still exhibited in the Virgin's church; it is painted upon a cloth of linen manufacture, called *Uangochi*, composed of coarse threads spun from the fibres of the Maguey (*Agave Americana*), and woven very

widely apart. The Indians and Creoles say, the picture is miraculous, because, as it is approached, the painting becomes less visible, and when quite close, all traces of the picture disappear; their blind superstition not permitting them to discover, that the open texture of the material upon which it is painted is the cause of this disappearance. A priest told the author another circumstance respecting the Virgin's picture, which he deemed the most important part of the miracle; it is, that the picture was found under a heap of roses, in the winter season, and on a spot where those flowers had never bloomed. It did not occur to the priest, that at the distance of a few leagues the climate is quite different, and roses there grow throughout the year; and that, consequently, the painters of the picture of the virgin did not require celestial aid to procure any quantity of roses. In such veneration do the lower orders of Creoles, and indeed many of the middling and higher classes, and the Indians, hold their patroness, that they keep paintings of her in all their houses, invoke her in all their prayers, and implore her assistance in all their difficulties.

In the religious processions which take place in the Mexican empire, almost daily, for the

purpose of celebrating some rites of the church, or to offer homage to some of the tutelar saints, there is a solemnity and magnificence displayed, admirably calculated to captivate the vulgar, to gratify the vanity, and impose on the credulity of all classes of the community. The simplicity and purity of the Christian religion is lost in these pompous and mystical exhibitions. The poor converted Indian, as he is called, knows nothing of the Catholic religion beyond its ceremonies. To the images of saints, and other external symbols, he offers his daily homage, but he is as utterly uninformed of the precepts of the Christian doctrine, as any of the Pagans of former ages.

In order to accommodate the Catholic religion to the prejudices and consciences of the Indians, the priests, with their usual art, have interwoven many of the Indian customs and symbols with Christian ceremonies. Of this strange mixture of Pagan and Christian rites, there are, to this day, numerous evidences throughout the Mexican empire. On various holidays, the Indians of both sexes, dressed in the most fantastic manner, dance to the sound of rude instruments before the church doors, and in front of the altar, exhibiting the most ludicrous figures. During the parade of many

religious processions through the streets, we see Indians, decorated in the most grotesque manner, beating drums, dancing, and cracking fireworks. In the churches, we are struck by the glaring paintings and images of martyrs, saints, and bishops, surrounded by suns, moons, and stars; while the trinkets, precious stones, gold and silver ornaments, and the twinkling of numbers of wax tapers, induce a stranger to believe, that he is in one of the fairy edifices of Aladdin, instead of a temple dedicated to the Christian worship. In a conspicuous situation, in the wall of the cathedral church of the city of Mexico, is placed a huge, misshapen stone, on which are engraved hieroglyphic characters, that had formerly been appropriated to the religious ceremonies of the aborigines. In the painting of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Mexican patroness is represented in a blue robe embellished with stars, and standing on a crescent supported by cherubim. Even the complexion of the virgin has been suited to the spirit of the times, in order to prove to the Indians that her apparition was a mark of the especial favour of Heaven. If, therefore, she had been represented with a fair complexion, the intent might not have been answered; and, for this reason, perhaps, we see her represented with features of a "dusky hue."

To support these pompous ceremonies; or, as it is styled, to maintain the splendour and dignity of the church, the unfortunate Mexican is taught to believe, constitutes his primary duty; hence, the greatest part of the fruits of his hard labour are absorbed by the ecclesiastic coffers.

The wealth that has been lavished on some of the religious edifices, will appear incredible to those who have never visited Spanish America. From the numerous instances which every where present themselves in Mexico, we select the following.

About three leagues from the town of *San Miguel el Grande*, in the province of Guanaxuato, stand two chapels, on the summit of a high mountain; one, for ordinary divine offices, the other, to exhibit the different scenes, in the sufferings of our Redeemer, previous to and on his arrival at Mount Calvary. In this chapel was a magnificent altar, on which were the images of our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, and other saints, made of solid silver, ornamented with emeralds and other precious stones. On entering this chapel, on the left hand, the stranger is astonished on beholding a range of *thirty-two altars*, on each of which are figures, the size of life, representing the different passages in our Saviour's ordeal; and at the end,

Mount Calvary, with the body on the cross, accompanied by Mary, John, and others, mentioned in Holy Writ. All these altars, figures, crosses, &c. are of pure silver. This temple is called the sanctuary of our *Lord of Atonilco*, from the name of the place where it is situated. Devotees from all parts of the kingdom go there to confess, and conform to the penance prescribed by the priests; and large sums are annually collected by our Lord of Atonilco, from these devout pilgrims.

The origin of this chapel merits notice from its singularity. Many years ago, a bandit of the name of *Lohra*, was at the head of such a formidable band, that the Spanish government offered him not only a pardon, but an immense salary, with the arbitrary power and title of supreme judge of the *accordada*, provided he would exterminate the banditti. *Lohra* accepted the offer; seized his fellow robbers, and, under various pretexts, hung them up by hundreds on the trees; so that in a few months he completely destroyed them. He was immediately invested with the character of supreme judge, and enjoyed with it a salary of ten thousand dollars a year, until his death. This office was one of the most arbitrary and independent situations in the kingdom. He had the power of life and



death, inflicting what punishment he pleased, and levying contributions on all such as were found trafficking in liquors prohibited by the Spanish government.

Lohra no sooner found himself clothed with this extraordinary power, than he began to levy contributions without mercy on all whom he suspected of dealing in contraband liquors; and in case any one resisted his decrees, he was immediately hung. By such means he amassed immense treasures, which he devoted to building the sanctuary of our Lord of Atonilco.

His successors continued long to enjoy those high prerogatives; but they became so capricious and cruel, that about the year 1790, the viceroy, Count Galvez, took on himself the responsibility of putting a check on the tyrannical tribunal of the *accordada*. A man of the name of Santa Maria was then judge, and had three culprits at the foot of the gallows ready for execution, when Count Galvez suddenly presented himself on horseback, and pronounced their pardon in the name of the king. This act was highly grateful to the people of Mexico; and Charles III. approved the conduct of Count Galvez, directing that, in future, all sentences of the judge of the *accordada* should be subject to the revision of the royal *audiencia*, of which the viceroy is president.

In having noticed thus briefly the superstitious follies and extravagance which have been encouraged among the Mexicans by the Spanish priests, we do not mean to speak lightly of the Catholic religion; it is the abuses which have been sanctioned under its name that we reprobate, and think a proper subject for animadversion. We have no prejudices against any particular denomination of Christians; but we have deeply to regret, that many other sects, as well as the Catholics, have sullied the purity of true religion, by mingling with it a mass of ceremonies, revolting to common sense, and disgusting to every enlightened mind. We will now resume the thread of our narrative.

The brig returned to Galvezton from New Orleans, well equipped, and was now put under Mexican colours, as a national vessel of war: she was called *El Congreso Mexicano*.

The general received despatches from his agent at New Orleans, containing overtures from certain persons, who wished him to make an attack upon Pensacola, and who offered to furnish him with men, arms, &c. &c. for that purpose. Mina was anxious to examine into the merits of this project, conceiving that if it could be carried into effect, it might promote

his ulterior views on Mexico. Accordingly, he embarked in the brig, and proceeded to New Orleans, leaving Colonel Don Mariano Montilla, an officer who had distinguished himself in the Venezuelan revolution, in the command of the division at Galvezton.

Previous to the general's departure, a very extraordinary circumstance was brought to light, which threw on the Spanish government the odium of having attempted to get rid of Mina, by the treachery of one of his associates, a young Spaniard named Correa. This individual was under deep obligations to the general. He was the son of Diego Correa, who then resided in London, and who had been a conspicuous victim of the despotism of Ferdinand. Young Correa arrived in London from the continent, totally destitute of the means of subsistence; and, on expressing to the friends of Mina a wish to follow that officer, he was by them fitted out in a handsome style, his expenses and passage to the United States were paid, and a letter of credit on New York was furnished him. He arrived at that city, and then proceeded to Baltimore to meet the general, who received him with that generous sympathy, which he invariably manifested toward the sufferers by Ferdinand's tyranny. The

diplomatic agents of Spain, resident there, easily ascertained that he enjoyed the high regard and confidence of Mina; and, of course, it became important to gain over Correa to the interest of their sovereign. It is unnecessary to recount the various artifices employed to purchase the co-operation of this youth, and to induce him, in defiance of all the obligations of honour and gratitude, to lend himself to the infernal machinations of the oppressor of his own family; but the following plain statement of facts will shew how deeply he was implicated in the plan formed for the destruction of his friend and benefactor.

He accompanied the expedition to Galveston. After being there a short time, in order to create an opportunity of fulfilling, to the letter, his new engagement, he made an attempt to excite a mutiny among Aury's troops, and had the address to seduce several of Aury's officers, as well as two of Mina's, and to influence them so as to promote the mutiny; but he did not, except to one individual, confide his real intention. Fortunately, however, one of Aury's officers disclosed the plot to the commodore, by whom the conspirators were instantly arrested. A court of inquiry was held on Mina's officers; but the general, conceiving it impos-

litic to punish them with the severity due to their offence, merely gave them a severe reprimand, and set them at liberty.

Correa, finding his first essay thus prove abortive, was soon convinced, by the contemptuous demeanour of Mina's officers, that it was impracticable for him a second time to foment an insurrection among the troops. To attempt the accomplishment of his designs, singly, involved greater personal hazard than he dared to encounter. His longer stay at Galvezton was, therefore, useless. His present situation was also sufficiently unpleasant; and, accordingly, he became anxious to abandon the expedition, and eagerly embraced the opportunity of retiring from the island, in pursuance of an order to repair to New Orleans.

He had but just left the island, when Mina received letters from the United States, of which the substance was published in an order of the day, and caused, among the officers and soldiers of the division, one universal burst of indignation at the scheme of villainy they developed, and of regret, that they had unfortunately arrived too late to aid justice in her vengeance.

The letters in question stated, that Correa had been promised twelve thousand dollars, and a matrimonial connexion in the family of

the Chevalier Don Luis de Onis, then Spanish minister in the United States, provided Mina was put to death.

After Correa arrived at New Orleans, he felt his situation unsafe, as some of Mina's officers, who were there at the time, had threatened to inflict on him exemplary punishment; which he escaped by flying to Pensacola. He afterwards reached Havana, where the captain-general of Cuba, by way of premium for his services to the Spanish government, gave him a situation in the revenue department. The last accounts state, that he is now a custom-house officer at Trinidad de Cuba.

How far the Chevalier Don Onis might have been personally implicated in this nefarious business, the author knows not from any other than the preceding data; but he has been promised some authentic documents on the subject, and should they reach his hands, he will not hesitate to give them publicity. If the Chevalier really made such promises to Correa, he, no doubt, had in view the interests of his master, the beloved Ferdinand; and might, at least, plead in justification the chivalrous example which had been exhibited in Europe by the renowned Cossack general, Platoff, who offered his daughter to the wretch who should assassinate Napoleon.

We would, however, fain hope, for the honour of human nature, as well as for the dignity of the diplomatic character, that the suspicions excited against Chevalier Onis, in this affair, may eventually turn out to be unfounded, and that Correa was not stimulated by such high authority to sacrifice his patron; but the page of history, more especially of the events of the last thirty years, shews that diplomatists have, on various occasions, countenanced deeds that would dishonour banditti, and have boldly asserted the pernicious doctrine, that "*the end justifies the means.*"

The ministers of Spain, resident in foreign countries, have long been in the habit of accomplishing their views by the most refined intrigue, and certainly have not always been very delicate as to the means they have employed. Arrogant menaces, and secret promises, they have considered as component points in diplomacy. It may not be amiss, although a digression from our narrative, to insert here two letters, written some years ago, on the subject of Miranda's expedition, because they will illustrate the prevailing spirit and policy of the Spanish cabinet more clearly than an hundred ordinary anecdotes.

In the year 1806, Miranda conducted an ex-

pedition against the province of Caracas, which failed. Several foreigners, who were engaged in it, fell into the hands of the Spanish government, among whom were some young Americans, belonging to distinguished families.

The Marquis de Casa Yrujo, then ambassador of Spain in the United States, received from the government of Caracas, a list of the names of those unfortunate prisoners, and immediately addressed to a friend of Colonel Smith, of New York, the following insidious letter:—

“ Philadelphia, June 28th, 1806.

“ SIR,

“ I have just received from Caracas a list of the names of the Americans taken by the Spaniards, on board of Miranda's schooners. The name of *Smith* is twice found it. I suspect the last to be the *son* of *Colonel Smith*, and *grandson* of *Mr. Adams*. Although I had some political difference with him when he was president, this circumstance has not deprived me of that particular regard and respect towards such a distinguished character, and particular consideration for his family. Not the least doubt exists, but the greater part of the prisoners will be put to death as pirates; and I should be very happy to be able, by a timely and immediate



interference, to save the life of the unfortunate youth, grandson to the venerable Mr. Adams and his worthy spouse. But, to render my intercession effectual, I would require, as the *only condition*, that Colonel Smith would disclose to me, through you, on his word of honour, *all the knowledge he has of Miranda's plans—of his intended points of attack—of the persons with whom he had connexions at Caracas—and the names of the Spaniards in this country, who shared in his scheme and expedition—in fact, all the material information he may be possessed of, and the knowledge of which may be useful to my government, and the preservation and tranquillity of the provinces Miranda had in view to revolutionize.*

“ As I remember your attachment for Mr. Adams, I take the liberty to make these suggestions to you, who, no doubt, will employ all means to relieve from affliction a worthy and disconsolate family ; at all events, I expect from you a prompt and decisive answer on this head. I remain, sir, with particular regard and consideration,

“ Your obedient servant,

(Signed) “ MARQUIS DE CASA YRUJO,

“ To Mr. — — —.”

The preceding letter was handed to Colonel Smith, who returned the following dignified and Roman-like answer:—

“ New York, June 30th, 1800.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Accept my warmest acknowledgments for your very interesting communication of this date, presented by your son, accompanied by a letter from the Marquis de Casa Yrujo, which, after maturely considering, I return, agreeably to your request. I am sure I shall do justice to Mr. and Mrs. Adams, if in their name I thank the marquis for his very polite attention, in a case no doubt near, interesting, and affecting! I am sure, when I do him the justice to communicate his tender solicitude for their grandson, it will not fail to excite those sensibilities and acknowledgments, which the marquis is highly entitled to. For myself, not having the honour of his acquaintance, I have no right to expect other attention, or dignity of character, than what would naturally spring from his own mind, when making such an interesting communication.

“ He informs me, he has just received from Caracas a list of the names of the Americans taken by the Spaniards, on board of Miranda's

schooners; that the name of Smith is twice found in it; and he suspects the last to be my son, and grandson to Mr. Adams; and says, that he should be very happy, by a timely and immediate interference, to save the life of the unfortunate youth, grandson to the venerable Mr. Adams, and his worthy spouse; he having no doubt but the greatest part of the Americans will be put to death; but to render this intercession effectual, he requires, as the *only condition*, that I declare to him, through you, on my *word of honour*, all the knowledge I have of Miranda's plans—of the points of attack—of the persons with whom he has connexions in the Caracas—and the names of the Spaniards in this country, who shared in his schemes and expedition—in fact, all the material information I may be possessed of, the knowledge of which may be useful to the Spanish government, for the promotion and preservation of tranquillity in the provinces Miranda had in view to revolutionize.

“ When the marquis takes a dispassionate view of the circumstances connected with General Miranda's visit to Washington, his subsequent visit here, and clearly ascertains that the persons accompanying him in the *Leander* were not informed of his projects and

plans, he will permit his benevolence to expand, and shelter all those taken in the schooners from harsh treatment and unmerited punishment, and will induce the government of his own country to view the question in other lights, than those which may tend to expose it to more serious animadversions than have been hitherto made, or to rousing the spirit of indignation and resentment, which, if once permitted to burst forth, cannot fail of being attended by strong marks of resentment.

“ With regard to my son, he was not made acquainted with the plans of Miranda ; he went with him as a young companion, to share his fortune and his fate ; he was accompanied by some of his friends, capable of deeds of hardihood and valour, worthy their leader—worthy their cause !

“ Whatever may be the situation and fate of the prisoners on board of the schooners, I can never tacitly sanction the lash of tyranny on his associates, and snatch my son from a participation in their fate, whatever it may be. Nothing but the marquis’s want of acquaintance with me can plead an excuse for the indelicacy of the proposition.

“ Do me the favour, my friend, to inform the marquis, that were I in my son’s situation,

I would not comply with his proposals to save myself, and would not cast so great an indignity on my son, my family, and myself, as to shelter him under the shield of disgrace.

"I have no doubt the marquis will give such advice to the government of Caracas, and make such statement to his king (by whom I may have the honour to be personally recollected), as will induce them not to tarnish the dignified character of the Spanish nation, by an act of passion and barbarity, connected with the present case.

"I am, dear sir, with respect,

"Your friend and humble servant,

(Signed) "WILLIAM S. SMITH:

"To ———."

Fortunately, the son of Colonel Smith was not among the hapless prisoners at that time in Caracas; but there is little doubt, that had he been there, he would have been sacrificed among the victims of Spanish cruelty who were executed at Puerto Cavello. He is now a resident of the city of Washington.

After the departure of Mina for New Orleans, as already mentioned, a serious difference arose between Commodore Aury, and Colonel Perry, who commanded a body of one hundred Ameri-

cans, in Aury's service. When Mina first landed, Perry determined, with his men, to quit the service of Aury, and join the standard of Mina. This intention was soon discovered by the commodore, who tried various means to dispossess Perry of his command; he at length, on the 1st of March, arrested him and Captain Gordon, making prisoners of them in his own quarters. This act produced an open rupture. Perry's men, on being informed that their colonel was thus arrested, sent word to the commodore, that they were determined to defend him to the last, and for that purpose beat to arms. To oppose this party, Aury drew up the men whom he thought were in his interest, about eighty in number, principally coloured men, under the command of Colonel Savary, with one field-piece. During this disgraceful scene in Aury's camp, Mina's division was not inactive. Colonel Montilla placed sentries so as to cut off the communication between the encampments; a supply of ammunition was delivered, and the division was kept under arms. This altercation, however, fortunately terminated without bloodshed. Perry was liberated; he and his men were allowed by the commodore to join the standard they preferred; as well as such others of the

commodore's troops as might deem proper so do to. Colonel Perry accordingly placed himself under the orders of Mina.

While the general was at New Orleans, he had frequent interviews with the gentlemen who had proposed the project of an expedition against Pensacola. But he soon discovered that it was merely a mercantile speculation, from which no advantage would result in favour of his views on Mexico; indeed, all the propositions made to him, while at New Orleans, were widely different from his own plans. As a soldier and a patriot, he disliked to war for mercenary considerations, and he was most decidedly hostile to all predatory projects. He purchased, at New Orleans, a ship (the *Cleopatra*) for a transport, to replace the ship with which he left England, having given her up according to agreement.

Having likewise made arrangements for the purchase of another ship, the *Neptune*, he set sail for Galvezton, taking with him a few European and American officers. Upon his arrival, on the 16th of March, he found the division embarked, and ready for sailing.

In consequence of not having received any definite information of a place at which he could unite with any part of Victoria's forces, and as

the whole line of coast was in possession of the royalists, he resolved to proceed to a town called *Soto la Marina*, on the river Santander, in the colony of that name. This was a point at which the descent was least expected by the royalists; the enemy having conjectured that the general meditated effecting a landing in the northern parts of the province of Vera Cruz, for the purpose of forming a junction with Victoria. They had therefore concentrated a body of troops in the vicinity of Tuspan, a central situation, from whence they could quickly march to the invaded point, and crush Mina at the outset.

During the time the division was at Galveston, some of the officers had resigned, and received passports to leave the island; Colonel Montilla, and two other officers of Caracas, also embarked for New Orleans.

While the fleet was waiting a wind, two brigs, the one a prize to a Mexican privateer, the other to a Buenos Ayres cruizer, laden with jerked beef and rice, were brought in for condemnation. As there was not leisure to attend to their business, it was determined that they should proceed with the expedition. The division was distributed among the vessels; and, the wind coming from the northward, the fleet,



on the 27th of March, made sail. It consisted of the following vessels :—

*An armed schooner*—Commodore Aury, having on board the company of artillery, and the cavalry, under Colonel the Count De Ruuth,

*Cleopatra (transport)*—Captain Hooper, the general and staff, Guard of Honour, and first regiment of the line.

*Two prize brigs*—Regiment of the Union, Colonel Perry.

*Neptune (store-ship)*—Captain Wisset, commissariat and stores.

*Schooner Ellen Tooker*—on a trading voyage; she arrived as the fleet was getting under weigh, and agreed to accompany the expedition.

*A small sloop*—Captain Williams.

The force of the division, on board the fleet, including all those in any manner attached to it, the sailors, mechanics, and servants, was three hundred.

Soon after sailing, it came on to blow heavily from the westward, which threatened a long run; and it was also discovered that the *Cleopatra* had not the necessary provisions on board. The general had confided in the reports made

by the then commissary, Bianchi, and the captain of the ship ; and presumed, that, agreeably thereto, stores had been shipped. Supplies were however obtained from the cargo of the prize brig : but on the arrival of the fleet off the Rio Grande del Norte, the water was nearly expended. As the weather had moderated, the general resolved to endeavour to procure supplies there, and the fleet ran in and anchored off the mouth of the river. A serjeant's guard had been stationed there by the royalists, for the purpose, as was understood, of preventing privateers from watering. Major Sardá and some other officers, who volunteered, were sent on shore to ascertain if supplies could be procured. As the fleet had hoisted Spanish colours, and as Major Sardá, the commander of the party, was a Spaniard, the guard supposed the fleet to be Spanish, bound to Vera Cruz. The boats had free access to the river to obtain water ; and the soldiers of the guard drove up some cattle, which were wild, and in great abundance. The bar of the Rio Grande is very shoal, and it was with great difficulty that a small supply of water could be got off, owing to the danger of the bar. A boat belonging to Commodore Aury's schooner was upset among the breakers, and a Spanish officer, Lieutenant

Dallares, was unfortunately lost. This young Spaniard, to whom Mina had been a benefactor, and who had left England with him, was one of the few of his countrymen that had adhered to the general to the last. Mina was much attached to him, and deeply regretted the accident which had deprived him of a warm friend. Four men also, belonging to the fleet, deserted and hid themselves in the woods; they afterwards presented themselves to the enemy, to whom they gave every information.

As soon as the vessels had obtained a sufficient supply of fresh beef and water, to carry the expedition to the intended point, the fleet made sail, with the wind at south-east; but it soon afterwards shifted to the westward, and blew a gale, in which the vessels were dispersed. The troops on board the *Cleopatra*, whose stores were less ample than those of the other vessels, were thereby placed in a disagreeable situation. The fresh beef would not last more than twenty-four hours, and the prize brig, which had hitherto supplied their wants, was not in sight. The stores were soon reduced to a small quantity of bread, and a keg of almonds, and as the weather continued bad, it became absolutely necessary to put every one on short allowance. Accordingly, half a biscuit, and a

few almonds, with a pint of water, were daily served out to each man, the general receiving the same; but this privation continued only five or six days. The *Cleopatra* arrived at the rendezvous the 11th of April; and the next and the following day the rest of the fleet got in also.

Arrangements were then made to disembark the troops; and, early on the 15th, it was effected without accident.

Two men, dressed and mounted as peasantry (*paisanos*) joined the general in the course of the day. They afforded him some local information; and he understood from them that *Don Felipe La Garza*, the commandant of the district, was in the adjacent town of *Soto la Marina*, with a small force. These men appeared frank and well-disposed, and offered their services as guides, and accompanied a party to drive up some horses. They, however, watched an opportunity, and slipped off. It afterwards appeared, that these men were Creoles, of that part of the country, and royalist soldiers, who had been sent down by La Garza, to ascertain the strength of the invading force, which having done, to the best of their abilities, they decamped. The general had brought with him from New Orleans a native of *Soto la Marina*, so

that he suffered no great inconvenience for the want of a guide, by the desertion of his new friends.

During the passage from Galvezton, Mina published an address to his companions in arms, in which he reminded them of the sacred enterprise in which they had engaged, and urged them constantly to bear in mind that they were not going to conquer the country, but to aid in its emancipation from a tyrannical government; he particularly recommended to them to be careful in conciliating the good-will of the inhabitants, to respect their customs, to shew the most scrupulous regard to the ministers of religion, and on no occasion, nor under any pretence, to violate the sanctity of the temples dedicated to divine worship.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Soto la Marina occupied by Mina—General arrangements there—Action of Colonel Perry with Don Felipe La Garza—Continuation of events in Soto la Marina—Capture of the Cleopatra, by the Spanish frigate La Sabina—Dastardly conduct of the officers of that Expedition—Line of march taken up for the interior—A succession of events—Action at, and capture of the town of El Valle de Matiz—Occurrences at that place, and departure therefrom—Battle of Peotillos—Sanguinary decrees of the enemy—Conduct of the priest of Hideonda, and remarks thereon—Mina's progress—Attack and taking of Sierra de Pinos—Departure therefrom—Junction with the Patriots—Arrival at the Patriot fortress of Sombrero—Its description.*

THE mouth of the river Santander is very narrow, and has a bar across it, over which vessels drawing more than six feet of water cannot be carried. Near the beach the country is intersected by large bayous, and shallow ponds, extending a long way to the northward. After passing the bar, the river suddenly widens, but afterwards gradually contracts itself towards the

town of Soto la Marina. It is navigable, for such vessels as can pass the bar, to within a very short distance of the town, beyond which it is too shallow even for boats. The village (*pueblo*) of Soto la Marina stands upon an elevated situation, on the left or north bank of the river, and is distant from its mouth eighteen leagues.

On the morning of the 15th, the boats of the fleet were despatched, with a field-piece, some stores, and a detachment of artillery, to meet the division at the old settlement of Soto la Marina, which is but a short distance up the river, on the road to the present village; for which place the division, at the same time, took up its march. The boats, not finding the division at the old settlement, as was expected, proceeded to the town, where they found the troops had just arrived. The division had been three days on the march from the beach, owing to the ignorance of the guide, who had conducted it by a very circuitous route; and it had suffered much, from extreme heat and want of water.

In Mexico, five months of the year, commencing with May, are rainy; the other seven are perfectly dry. The expedition had landed at a period of the most parching heat and

drought, when every rivulet was dried up; so that a march in the middle of the day was almost insupportable. The least fatiguing method of conducting a march in Mexico, particularly in the low regions of its coasts and the internal provinces, is, to move forward at the first dawn of day, and advance until nine or ten o'clock; then to halt, and employ the interval in cooking, and refreshing the troops, until four in the afternoon, when the march should be resumed, and continued until a halt is made for the night. Thus, more ground can be gone over, and with less fatigue to the soldier, than by continuing the march through the middle of the day.

The advanced guard, composed of volunteers from the Guard of Honour, and the cavalry, with a detachment of the first regiment of the line, under Major Sardá, entered Soto la Marina, without any opposition; La Garza, with the garrison and some families, evacuating the town on its approach. The division was met, at the entrance of the village, by the curate, who welcomed the general with open arms. When La Garza announced to the inhabitants the landing of Mina, he represented him as accompanied by a band of heretics, who had come into the country to deal out destruction



in the cause of liberty, and set forth the motives which had induced him to espouse that of the suffering colonies. This document soon reached the military commandants, many of whom, with their troops, would have joined the standard of Mina; but, as they had ascertained the strength of his division, they held back, conceiving his force too inconsiderable to effect any important object. Nevertheless, many of the inhabitants were not overawed by the royalists; and, in the first instance, countrymen, to the number of upwards of one hundred, united under his banners: they were well-formed, hardy fellows, and subsequently proved themselves faithful and brave. The division, at different periods, was joined by other recruits, the whole number amounting to above two hundred. Among those who joined it were two royalist officers—Lieutenant-Colonel Don Valentine Rubio, and his brother Lieutenant Rubio.

The attention of the general was constantly directed towards the equipment and regulation of his little band. By Colonel Rubio, as well as from other sources, he was furnished with horses; one hundred of the recruits were attached to the cavalry, and the others to the first regiment. Those who afterwards joined the

division, were enrolled either with the hussars, the dragoons, or the first regiment. The different corps were equipped as follows:—

*Guard of Honour (infantry)*—Officers, uniformed as such, armed with musquet and bayonet.

*Artillery*—Brown coats, faced with red; four field-pieces; two 6-inch howitzers, and two  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inch mortars.

*Cavalry, Hussars*—Scarlet hussar jackets, chacot and plume; armed with swords, light dragoon carabines, and pistols.

———, *Dragoons*—United States dragoon uniform; armed with sword, pistol, and lance.

*Regiment of the Union*—Uniform of the British 104th regiment of infantry.

*First regiment of the line*—United States rifle uniforms.

Mina, in furtherance of his plans, scoured the country in every direction; but, although these incursions were made by small parties, sometimes composed of not more than twenty men, yet La Garza, who was hovering in the vicinity of Soto la Marina, with upwards of three hundred men, never attacked them. The general

visited some of the towns and haciendas (plantations), and a detachment penetrated even to *Santander*, the capital of the province: but La Garza's threats obliged the respectable inhabitants to retire from their settlements, on the approach of Mina's parties; and, however ill inclined they might be to such removal, they were forced to comply with seeming alacrity.

During this period, a valuable prize was unluckily snatched from the grasp of the general. He received intelligence that Don Ramon de la Mora, owner of the hacienda of *Palo Alto*, seven leagues distant from Soto la Marina, who had been for some time amusing him with promises of supplies, had suddenly decamped, taking with him all his moveables, with his cash, amounting, as was said, to one hundred thousand dollars; and that he was encamped in a *rancho*,\* eleven leagues distant from the town. The general, with twenty dragoons, and eighty infantry,

\* *Rancho* signifies a farm, or place containing one or more peasant huts, having no church, and depending for spiritual assistance on the curate of an adjoining pueblo or hacienda. A church is necessary to constitute a pueblo; but a collection of houses, be their number great or small, if there be not a church, is called a rancho. Some of them are very extensive, while others contain only a single house. Some of the pueblos contain merely the church and the curate's house, while others have a dense population.

under Colonel Perry, marched, on the same night, to surprise him. While on their way, the general was informed, that De la Mora was escorted by a body of troops. Arrived within two leagues, Mina ordered Colonel Perry to continue his march to the rancho, while he, with the cavalry, took another road, that they might attack the enemy in front and rear. Having arrived near the rancho, and expecting to find the enemy unprepared, the general charged into the place; but, to his great surprise, he found neither the enemy nor his own infantry: the houses also were abandoned, but the lights which were burning evidently denoted that their inmates had recently fled. Unable to gain any intelligence, either of his infantry, or of the object of his march, he was obliged to return to Soto la Marina, highly mortified at the disappointment.

Perry, after separating from the cavalry, arrived at the rancho, where he learned that Don Ramon had proceeded onward; and, leaving information with the inhabitants for the general, he marched in pursuit of him. But, as soon as Perry had left the place, the people retired to the woods. Unexpectedly, in the morning, Colonel Perry came upon the object of his pursuit, encamped in a plain; and the property was captured. But it had not been long in his

possession, when La Garza, with three hundred and fifty men, who had been escorting the property, made his appearance. The colonel, finding himself opposed by such a superiority of force, and being unacquainted with the character of his enemy, deemed it prudent to occupy an advantageous position, there to act on the defensive, leaving a guard of six men with the property. La Garza advanced singly, and held a parley with an officer of Colonel Perry; during which he offered the royal clemency to the troops, if they would lay down their arms. This proposition put an end to the conference: La Garza returned to his troops, and prepared for the attack. In the mean time, Perry, who, whatever faults may be ascribed to him, was an heroic American, addressed his men in a short but enthusiastic harangue; reminding them, that the eyes of their country were fixed on their conduct, and that an opportunity now presented itself to prove that they were worthy of the cause they had espoused. At that moment, the enemy's cavalry charged, with its accustomed impetuosity; but were repulsed. They returned to the charge, and made several unsuccessful attempts to break Perry's infantry; but, finding all their endeavours fruitless, they at length retired in confusion, leaving nine dead. As the colonel had no

cavalry, with which to follow up his success, the enemy again formed, but manifested no disposition to renew the attack. Perry, after having gained this advantage, was reluctantly obliged to abandon the object of his expedition, being unable, from the want of cavalry, to withdraw the property. He fell back, unmolested, on Soto la Marina. In this affair, he lost one man killed, and two taken prisoners; they belonged to the guard placed over the property: but, in the ranks, no one was either killed or wounded. This advantage, although trivial as regards the injury done the enemy, had great weight with Mina's division; it inspired confidence, and created a belief in his little band, that they were able to contend against far superior numbers.

After Mina's disembarkation, a force of more than eight hundred royalists was stationed at Altamira, forty leagues south of Soto la Marina. The passive conduct of the enemy, in allowing Mina to remain so long unmolested, is a circumstance which can best be explained by the royal commanders. But the dispersed condition of the enemy's troops, who were scattered in small parties over the country, and the invasion of the kingdom at Soto la Marina being entirely unexpected, are, it is probable, the reasons

why Don Joaquin Arredondo, the commandant-general of the eastern internal provinces, was so long in making preparations, and so slow in moving from Monterey, his head-quarters.

The situation of that division of the kingdom, and indeed of the whole of Mexico, was at this time very critical. The great body of the troops were disaffected to the royal cause; Mina was adored by the European soldiers; and he had indubitable intelligence, that a large number of natives were ready to come down from the mountains to the sea-coast to join him, who were only prevented from so doing by the subsequent movement of the enemy. Had Mina landed with only five hundred troops, he might, with a sure confidence of success, have awaited the enemy in his entrenchments at Soto la Marina; and there can scarcely exist a doubt, that, in that case, a blow would have been struck against Arredondo, from which he could not have easily recovered. The intimate knowledge which we have acquired, since that period, respecting the royal troops—their known disaffection—the intrepidity and superior appointment of Mina's little band—and the distinguished ability, activity, and bravery of their commander,—all combine to warrant this assertion.

The general, by advices and spies, received

intelligence, at the commencement of the month of May, that Arredondo was concentrating all the disposable force of the *comandancia*. Knowing that the enemy would be too strong for his small force, he proposed to throw up a small work of defence at Soto la Marina, for the purpose of protecting the military stores, and holding out against a siege, should the royalists attempt to invest it; while, in the interim, he should, by rapid marches, penetrate into the interior, and form a junction with the patriots in that quarter; an enterprise which he conceived to be practicable, and from which he flattered himself he should be able to return with an augmented force, sufficient to defeat the enemy, and also to bring with him pecuniary supplies. In pursuance of these determinations, an eligible situation was selected, on the bank of the river, a little to the eastward of the village; and the construction of the fort was commenced, under the direction of Captain Rigal, of the engineers. The whole division laboured with alacrity, in the accomplishment of this work, in which they were assisted by the country people; the general himself setting the example, by sharing the labour with them. The little fortification was soon in a state of considerable forwardness; and, although it was only a mud



fort, yet it was hoped, that, when completed, it would be sufficient to bid defiance to the efforts of the enemy. As the river was here very narrow, it was intended to throw up a redoubt on the opposite bank, which should protect the rear of the fort, and cover the water.

Mina's conduct, on this occasion, was marked with the greatest firmness and intrepidity. Aware that Arredondo would put in motion an overwhelming force of two thousand men at least, he resolved to leave a garrison in the mud fort, and to cut his way, with the residue of his little band, into the interior of the Mexican empire. These dispositions appear stamped with temerity, or rather bear the features of knight-errantry; but the circumstances of his situation justified the measures that he adopted, and the sequel will shew, that untoward circumstances alone prevented the gallant general from succeeding in his object.

During this interval, Commodore Aury had departed in his schooner, having made an arrangement with the general for the purchase of his brig of war, the Congreso Mexicano, then in New Orleans.

The prize brigs had also sailed, and there remained at the bar, the Cleopatra, Neptune, and Ellen Tooker. The former had come

down as a transport, in ballast. The Neptune store-ship, being old, and a very heavy sailer, was run on shore at the mouth of the river, as soon as she was discharged, in order to be broken up, as her materials could be applied to various other purposes. Of her cargo, a considerable quantity had been carried up the river, though much, particularly of the powder, still remained at the landing-place. The officers and seamen of the ships, left to protect these stores, had pitched some tents on the beach, with the view of sheltering them from the weather; but they little expected that these very tents would have the effect, as was subsequently proved, of exciting alarm among the crews of a Spanish frigate and two schooners, so as to deter them from disembarking for the purpose of destroying the stores.

On the part of the sailors, matters went on very pleasantly till the morning of the 17th of May, when, at seven o'clock, the Spanish frigate *La Sabina*, and the schooners *La Belona* and *La Proserpina*, appeared in the offing, having been despatched from Vera Cruz with the most positive orders (as it afterwards appeared) not only to destroy the vessels, but also the stores that might be found on shore.

At sight of these unwelcome visitors, the

crew of the Cleopatra got into the boats, and pushed for the shore. As it was impossible for the seamen to resist so powerful an enemy, all hands abandoned the stores, took to the boats, and came up to Soto la Marina with the intelligence. Captain Hooper, however, remained with his boat a short way up the river, from whence he could distinctly observe the conduct of the Spanish marine.

The Ellen Tooker immediately made sail, and, as the Spaniards say, escaped by superior sailing. The Cleopatra had nothing whatever on board, except a cat, which the sailors, in their hurry, had forgotten to carry with them. The vessel had not the semblance of any thing warlike; she was quite light, had bright sides, and was without quarters. While the schooners were in chase of the Ellen Tooker, the frigate acted with *commendable* caution. She came down with great care upon the unfortunate Cleopatra, and after pouring *two broadsides* into her, finding she made no return, they ventured to board and take possession of her. Encouraged by this dash, they manned the boats of the squadron (the schooners having returned from the chase), for the purpose of landing, and either carrying off or destroying the stores on the beach. After pulling near the mouth of

the river, these valiant fellows took fright at the sight of the tents pitched by the sailors. The appearance of them probably excited an apprehension that a party was in waiting; they, therefore, thought it most prudent to abandon this perilous attempt, and to content themselves with the victory achieved over the empty ship. They accordingly returned to their respective vessels, and soon afterwards, having put two guns from the frigate on board the prize, the whole squadron made sail. The ship, however, was so much shattered by the unmerciful cannonading she had sustained, as to be rendered unseaworthy, and, after being in possession of the enemy a short time, they burnt her.

On returning to Vera Cruz, these heroes boasted of their bravery in having destroyed *two* vessels, one a *ship of war*, alluding to the Neptune, which, it will be recollected, had been previously broken up by order of the general; and they alleged as a reason for not destroying the stores ashore, that the surf ran too high. The true reason we have before conjectured; for the surf certainly was no obstacle. The stores had been safely landed when it had been equally great, and the crew of the ship had that very morning experienced no difficulty from it.

The victory over the rebel Mina, at Soto la

Marina, was celebrated at Vera Cruz, on the return of the frigate La Sabina, by a solemn Te Deum. Despatches were transmitted to the city of Mexico, which were afterwards published in the Mexican Gazette, announcing that Mina's expedition was totally destroyed, and a *number* of prisoners taken. In consequence of this signal victory, a general promotion took place; and the midshipman, who fearlessly boarded the Cleopatra, was appointed a lieutenant. We shall have occasion, in the course of this work, to notice other exaggerations and palpable falsehoods, which the Spanish government have been in the habit of publishing in the course of this revolution; indeed, how could it be otherwise, when there is only a solitary newspaper in the whole kingdom, and that one under the vigilant control of a despotic government?

Mina heard of the arrival of the squadron off the river, and of the capture of the vessels, with the greatest composure. He at once concluded, that the enemy would not only destroy the stores, but would co-operate with Arredondo. The general therefore ordered a detachment, with a field-piece, down the river, to observe the movements of the enemy; but Captain Hooper soon after coming up, his account

of the affair converted the alarm of the garrison into a scene of merriment, at the expense of their valiant antagonists.

The fort was by this time in a state of completion. Four carronades from the fleet, the field-pieces and howitzers, were mounted. Two eleven and a half inch mortars, a considerable quantity of ammunition, and part of the Neptune's cargo, were brought up. Cattle were killed, and their flesh jerked; such corn as could be procured in the vicinity was brought in; and the place was put in as good a state of defence, as the time and circumstances would permit.

As General Arredondo had commenced his march from Monterey, and was advancing upon the garrison with a body of two thousand men and seventeen pieces of artillery (being the united force of the eastern internal provinces), Mina made the necessary dispositions for his intended march into the interior. He encamped the part of the division with which he was to perform the undertaking, on the right bank of the river, about a league distant from Soto la Marina, where it remained a few days.

Colonel Perry had for some time given strong evidences of discontent. He had frequently declared an opinion, that the division was too weak to be of any service to the patriots, and

that he anticipated its annihilation. It was afterwards supposed, that he had long meditated the scheme which he now put into execution. Taking advantage of the absence of the general and Colonel Young from the encampment, he harangued his soldiers, and informed them of his intention of separating from Mina, and returning to the United States; he represented to them the very great perils into which they were about to be drawn, and urged them to retreat while an opportunity presented itself. By these means he prevailed on fifty-one of his soldiers, including Major Gordon, and the rest of his officers, with one of the Guard of Honour, to accompany him. They marched in the direction of Matagorda, at which place he expected to meet with a number of boats sufficient to convey his party within the line of demarcation, between the United States and the Spanish possessions.

The colonel's conduct caused both surprise and regret; for although he had occasionally manifested some caprice and discontent, yet no one supposed it possible that he could abandon the cause in the hour of danger; and indeed his conduct on this occasion is still very mysterious. Besides, to march with such a handful of men along the sea-coast, where he knew that

water, particularly at that season of the year, was very scarce, and when the enemy, it was presumable, would oppose his progress, was an act of palpable rashness.

It was subsequently ascertained from the best Mexican authorities, that the colonel did actually penetrate to within a short distance of his destined point, after several skirmishes with the royal troops, in which success attended him. Flushed with these victories, he determined on attacking a fortified position near Matagorda, which might have been left in his rear, as the garrison did not evince the least disposition to annoy him. He had summoned the commandant to surrender, who was deliberating on the propriety of so doing, at the moment when a party of two hundred cavalry made its appearance. A refusal to the summons was the consequence. The garrison sallied out, and a severe action commenced, in which Perry and his men displayed the most determined valour. They continued combating against this superiority of force till every man was killed, except Perry. Finding himself the only survivor, and determined not to be made a prisoner, he presented a pistol to his head, and terminated his existence. Thus perished a brave but rash man; and with him fell some valuable officers and men.



Colonel Perry had been in the United States service, and was at the memorable battle of New Orleans. He embarked in the cause of Mexico, and was attached to the division that invaded Texas, under Don José Bernardo Gutierrez. He was under the command of Toledo, in the attack made on the Spanish troops commanded by Arredondo, in advance of San Antonio de Bejar, on the 18th of August, 1813. In that disastrous affair the colonel behaved with his usual courage, but narrowly escaped with his life. His sufferings from fatigue and privations were extreme, before he again reached the United States.

The desertion of Colonel Perry, with so great a number of valuable men, was a most severe blow to Mina; but it did not daunt his resolute mind. Major Stirling, who had been in the service of the United States, was appointed to the command of the regiment of the Union, and other officers were nominated in lieu of those who had deserted.

Arredondo having by this time advanced to the vicinity of Soto la Marina, the general made his final arrangements at the fort; leaving, for its garrison, detachments of the Guard of Honour, artillery, first regiment of the line, engineers, medical and commissariat departments;

mechanics, &c. with the sailors of the destroyed vessels, under Captain Hooper, and some recruits. The whole, amounting to about one hundred men, were placed under the command of Major Don José Sardá. The general instructed the major to hold out to the last; assuring him, that he would return in a short time, and compel the enemy to raise the siege, should they attempt to form one during his absence.

On the 24th of May, the division commenced its march. It was composed of the following troops:—

General and staff. . . . .	11
Guard of Honour, Colonel Young . . . .	31
Cavalry, hussars and dragoons, Major } Maylefer . . . . .	124
Regiment of the Union, Major Stirling . .	56
First regiment of the line, Captain Travino	64
Artillery soldiers . . . . .	5
Officers' servants, armed . . . . .	12
Ordinanzas of the staff. . . . .	5
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>308*</b>

\* This was not the actual strength of the division, when it first marched. A change also took place in the corps, Some of the officers of the Guard of Honour were transferred, on the march, to other corps. During the first

When the march was commenced, the enemy was only a few leagues distant; and therefore the utmost secrecy, and rapid movements, became necessary, in order to elude him. The following day, the guide conducted the division through an Indian path, over hills covered with dense woods, which, in many places, it became necessary to re-open. It traversed thickets, which had not, perhaps, for many years previously, been penetrated. This day's march was long, commencing at sun-rise; and the troops suffered for want of water; for until sun-set, when the division emerged from the thickets, it had been exposed to a burning sun, without either breeze or water to refresh them. Some water was found at the edge of the entangled forest; and, after a few minutes' halt, the march was resumed, and continued till midnight, when the general, with the cavalry, advanced to an hacienda. Mina took with him the guide, and the division was in consequence obliged to

twelve days of its progress, several recruits offered themselves; and, as a few stand of arms and some clothing were carried along with the division, they were enrolled with the cavalry, or the first regiment. In addition to the above, there were several muleteers. To avoid a prolix detail, the writer has at once stated the greatest strength of the division.

halt; but it remained under arms, and at daylight again moved on, arriving about noon at the hacienda, fatigued and hungry.

Beef was here served out; but the necessary article of bread, from the difficulty of preparing it,\* could not possibly be procured; and the

\* The bread consumed by the Mexicans generally, but particularly by the country people, is made of Indian corn, and by a process unknown elsewhere. The quantity of corn, necessary for the daily consumption of the family, is put to steep, over night, in a large earthen vessel, in hot water, mixed with lime. This softens the husk, and in the morning it is ready for the next step in the process; but the taste of the corn, and the greatest part of its substance, is extracted by this preparation. It is then ground up, with much labour, between two flat stones, called by the Indians *a metate*; and afterwards formed, by beating it between the hands, into cakes, about eight or ten inches in diameter, and about one-sixteenth of an inch in thickness. They are then placed on an earthen heater, or griddle (*comal*), and baked. These cakes they call *tortillas*. The preparation of them is entirely performed by women; and, if the family be large, it requires four or five to perform this duty. The art of making *tortillas* is considered of great importance by the natives; and its excellency consists in grinding the grain till it becomes white, making the cakes thin, and, above all, in keeping the table supplied with a succession of hot ones during the meals. The Indian, when about to marry, is particularly careful to select for his bride one who understands this art; perfection in it being considered by them as the acme of female accomplishments. From the preceding description, it will

troops were under the necessity of eating meat alone. This was the general fare the road afforded, for the remainder of the march, and that only once in twenty-four hours. Although the whole of the troops were mounted, yet their progress was tedious and slow, as the horses were soon broken down by continual and long marches. The sufferings of the troops, from the want of good provisions, the tediousness of the marches under a broiling sun, and frequently many hours without water, together with other causes, were almost incredible; but, as it is not the intention of the writer to swell the narrative with a prolix statement of personal hardships, although it was one continued series of privations, he will restrict himself to the mention of such only as he conceives to be essential to the history.

The general, by making the rapid and secret march of the two preceding days, not only eluded the enemy, but calculated on being able

be perceived, that to make tortillas, in the small ranchos, for upwards of three hundred soldiers, would have required more time than could have been spared for the purpose; and therefore it rarely happened that the troops were supplied with this important article of food. In the towns and large villages, however, abundance of wheaten bread can always be procured.

to surprise some of the rich refugees from Soto la Marina, who, he learned, were at this hacienda; which was distant from that place, by the route taken by the division, twenty-five leagues. He presumed they would be lulled into security; as they conceived it was impossible for him to advance by the high road, without their receiving timely advice. In fact, the mission was completely surprised; but Mina found there only some priests, and the wife of Don Ramon de la Mora, the proprietor of Palo Alto. A part of the property which had been taken by Colonel Perry, was found deposited there; and, as it consisted of articles essential to the comfort and wants of the troops, the general ordered them to be distributed among his men.

From this place the division moved forward the next morning. Nothing material occurred, until its arrival at the town of Horcasitas, situated on the bank of the river Altamira. The river was fordable by one very dangerous pass only; and, in the crossing, one officer, Lieutenant Gabet, was swept away, with his horse, and drowned. About noon, on the following day, the troops reached a hacienda, on the opposite bank of the river, about five leagues down the stream, where a halt was made for the day. From this place a party was despatched

to bring in a herd of seven hundred horses, which had been collected, in the vicinity of this place, for the use of the enemy's troops. The horses were driven in: they were a most important acquisition to Mina, while their loss was severely felt by the enemy. The following afternoon, Mina continued his progress, having mounted his troops on the best of the horses, the remainder being driven in the rear of the division. But, a few nights afterwards, nearly the whole of these animals were lost, while the division was ascending, in great darkness, a thickly wooded mountain, by a very narrow and bad road. The general was now advancing upon the town of El Valle de Maiz. Mina's late movements had kept the royalists in a state of continual alarm. The enemy were at a loss to ascertain the point upon which they were directed; and, as both Altamira and Tampico were threatened by turns, the enemy were obliged to remain in these positions, to protect them. As soon, however, as he advanced from Horcasitas upon El Valle de Maiz, a strong body of troops was put in motion to pursue him. To these, the capture of the *cavallada* (herd of horses) just mentioned was a grievous event.

Just as the division was about to march, on

the morning of the 8th of June, a peasant arrived, with the intelligence that the enemy from El Valle de Maiz, about four hundred strong, all cavalry, had taken post in advance of the town, and were determined to make a bold stand there.

This news raised the spirits of the little band, who continued the march, anxious to come in contact with the enemy. It was soon perceived, from various articles of provisions scattered along the road, that the enemy had changed his resolution, and had retreated: the track of wheels also denoted that he had cannon. It appeared, however, that he again determined to make a stand; for, about noon, the division came upon the enemy, whose force consisted of nearly two hundred cavalry, advantageously posted on an eminence on the high road, three leagues from El Valle de Maiz.

The satisfaction manifested by the division, convinced Mina that he could rely on their conduct; and he immediately made dispositions for the attack. The infantry were dismounted; and the best marksmen from the Guard of Honour, and regiment of the Union, were selected to act as light troops. These, fourteen in number, were directed to enter a thicket, on which the enemy's left rested, and to dislodge



it ; while the main body remained firm, ready to act according to circumstances. The light troops advanced to the thicket, and after giving a few well-directed fires, by which they killed five, and wounded several others, they were astonished to see their antagonists fall back on their reserve. They were pursued by the same party, who again opened a fire on them, and the whole then retreated. The general, as soon as the enemy's troops gave way, ordered the main body to move on ; and, when they finally retreated, Mina selected from the cavalry twenty of the best mounted, partly foreigners, and partly natives of Soto la Marina, and boldly pursued the enemy, nearly four hundred strong, all cavalry, through the town, and a short way on the other side of it ; when a part of them rallied. The general, at the head of his twenty men, dashed in among them ; they broke, and fled. Mina pursued them upwards of two leagues, seized one gun, a small mountain piece, and put them entirely to the rout. He then returned, and occupied the town. The enemy lost several men, and some prisoners were taken. Mina had one man severely wounded, but none killed.

The personal intrepidity and skill displayed by the general on this occasion, produced in

the minds of the division, not only devotion to him, but the most unbounded confidence in his abilities.

El Valle de Maiz is situated near the river *Panuco*, and not far from the town bearing that name, in the province of *San Luis Potosi*. It was by far the best town the division had yet seen. It has a large square, with extensive and well-built edifices, and some handsome churches. The houses generally have an air of neatness, and are well constructed. The division had almost despaired of seeing a town like this; such had been the gloomy appearance of the country it had hitherto traversed. The road had lain through the worst part of the *Tierra Caliente*, or hot region, which, from the paucity of inhabitants, the want of culture, and the scarcity of water, had induced many to form a mean opinion of Mexico. But, at the Valle de Maiz, a brighter prospect was unfolded. The ascent into the *Tierra Fria*, or cold region, which extends over the vast mountain or table land, composing eight-tenths of the Mexican kingdom, had commenced. The population of the country was becoming more dense; good towns and fine haciendas now met the eye in various directions, and every hour gave a more agreeable climate.

El Valle de Maiz is a place of important trade, Its magazines were well stored with dry goods, and many of its inhabitants were extremely wealthy. They had, generally, decamped precipitately, under an impression that Mina's progress would be marked by sanguinary conduct. Their fears also were increased, in consequence of their having just celebrated, with great rejoicings, the pretended victory of the royal fleet over Mina, which the Gazette of Mexico had announced. Such, however, had been their hurry to escape, that they left to the mercy of their conqueror their valuable and well-furnished stores. Here Mina gave an unequivocal proof of his politic and generous character. The strictest orders were given to the troops not to stain the cause they had espoused, by any act of plunder or personal violence towards the inhabitants. Only a few articles, which were necessary for the troops, were taken from the stores; and he received but a moderate sum of money from the town; thus convincing the people, that he did not come to oppress or maltreat them. Some dry goods, captured during the march, were served out, and a few dollars each were given to the troops.

On the evening of the 9th, the general re-

received information that *Armiñan*, commandant of a battalion of the European regiment of infantry of the line of Estremadura, was in pursuit of him from Altamira, with about seven hundred infantry, and a strong body of cavalry, and was only two days' march in the rear. The receipt of this news caused neither surprise nor dismay among the troops. They were so elated by the victory recently gained, that, had the general proposed to march, and meet this formidable force, the troops would cheerfully have obeyed the order. But the general was too prudent to seek combats with such a disparity of numbers. His great object was to form a junction with the patriot forces in the interior; and although he calculated on his troops behaving well, yet he was aware that every action against superior numbers must reduce his own: it therefore became his invariable policy to avoid, instead of fighting, the enemy. He, however, called a council of his principal officers, to consult whether it was best to await the enemy in the same position, where the attack had been made the preceding day, or, by making forced marches, endeavour to join the patriots before the enemy could get up. The council determined in favour of the latter movement, and, at dawn the next morning, the division was on its march.

The marches were now longer than heretofore ; the troops obtaining scarcely any rest or refreshment : but they were cheered by Mina's example. He appeared superior to fatigues or privations, and was constantly on the alert.

On the 12th, at night, the division arrived and halted at a rancho. The next morning, a sufficiency of tortillas, with meat, was provided. A small detachment of cavalry was despatched to a neighbouring rancho, but was driven in by a superior number of the enemy's cavalry. It was also understood, that Armiñan was uniting with a considerable body, called the *Rio Verde* cavalry, and was but a few leagues off. Mina thereupon caused the division to move forward ; and as it became necessary to advance rapidly, time could not be spared to obtain provisions. On the night of the 14th, the division arrived at the hacienda called *Péotillos*. The enemy, however, by making double marches, was close up, and took prisoner a soldier of the regiment of the Union, who, unable to proceed, lagged in the rear.

On arriving at the hacienda, worn down by hunger and fatigue, the troops expected that something necessary for their refreshment would be obtained. But, to their great disappointment, they found that the *Mayor Domo* (overseer)

had run away, and had taken with him all the Indians, so that no cattle could be procured. In the tired state of the troops, sleep was even more grateful to them than provisions, and they consoled themselves with the expectation of a good meal the next morning. Accordingly, early in the morning of the 15th, the poultry and pigs of the hacienda were laid under requisition, and the troops were animated with the prospect of a good breakfast ; but at eight A. M. while it was cooking, advice was brought, that the advance-guard of the enemy was within two miles of the hacienda ; the troops were called to arms, and marched to a small eminence adjoining the hacienda, whence there was an extensive view of the plain.

The *hacienda de Peotillos* is the property of a convent in Mexico. It is valuable, and the buildings are extensive and handsome, situated at the foot of a range of hills running north and south, fifteen leagues north-west from the city of San Luis Potosi. East of the hacienda extends a large plain, bounded on that side also by hills. The plain, in many places, was planted with corn, but was much overrun with bushes, about ten feet high. The advance of the enemy had formed on the edge of one of these thickets, with a clear space of ground in its front, and near it was a corn field, strongly fenced in.

From the eminence, to which the division was marched, Mina reconnoitred the enemy. He saw that an action was now inevitable. To retreat in the presence of such a force, in the fatigued state of his infantry, and with the broken down horses of the cavalry, was destruction; and to defend the hacienda, would only have accelerated the extermination of his little band. He therefore determined to strike a blow, trusting that it might be attended by some fortunate results. Having fixed upon his plan, he rode up to his troops, and stated to them, that the body of cavalry then in view consisted of about four hundred men; that the cloud of dust rising some distance in the rear, was caused by the main body; but, he thought, that before it could get up, there might be time enough to defeat the advanced guard. The general concluded by asking them, if they were willing to march down to the plain, and attack the enemy. The division had learnt to despise the enemy's cavalry, and, from the knowledge they had acquired of their undisciplined state, and the great confidence they reposed in Mina, would cheerfully have engaged any number of them. With three cheers, they therefore answered the general, that they would follow wherever he chose to lead them. He, thereupon, selected

from the division, the Guard of Honour, the regiment of the Union, detachments from the cavalry and first regiment of the line, and the armed servants, composed of coloured boys, under the command of one of the general's servants, and marched to the conflict. His small band, including the general and staff, and a reinforcement of ten cavalry ordered up during the action, was *one hundred and seventy-two*. Of these, the Guard of Honour and regiment of the Union formed the line, and was commanded by Colonel Young; a detachment from the Union, and from the first regiment, the armed servants, operated as skirmishers; and the cavalry covered the flanks. The residue of the division remained in the hacienda, to protect the stores, of which Colonel Noboa was left in command.

Immediately on the arrival of the division at the cleared ground, the enemy made a furious charge; but were received with firmness. A well-directed fire checked their ardour, and they fell back, leaving twenty-two dead. But, knowing the powerful support that was coming up, and being joined in the meantime by a reinforcement of cavalry, they were thereby stimulated to continue the contest. They played round, occasionally charging, and harassing the



division in this manner, until the main body, composed of infantry, cavalry, and cannon, arrived. It got up under cover of the bushes before described, which had concealed its approach, until the first intimation that the division had of its arrival was a tremendous fire from its line. Mina, on perceiving the overwhelming force, made a disposition to retire upon the hacienda, in order to re-unite his forces. But the enemy, encouraged by this movement, advanced, beating the charge and maintaining a heavy fire, by which several of the little band fell. The general, finding it would be impracticable to draw off his troops, halted them, and made some necessary movements. The enemy, thereupon, took up a position, with their left resting on the fence of the corn-fields, and their right flanked by a cloud of cavalry. The division now saw the immense superiority of the force they had to contend with, and destruction appeared inevitable. But the serenity and courage of their leader filled the men with enthusiasm, and increased the resolution they had formed to sell their lives as dearly as possible.

The infantry had been supplied with buckshot, and many of the men loaded with eighteen in addition to the ball. They committed havoc

among the enemy. But the constant fire of the royalists considerably thinned the ranks of Mina's infantry, and his cavalry sustained some sharp conflicts, and suffered severely.

At length the enemy's cavalry were observed coming up in the rear, and lancing the unfortunate wounded; several of whom had still sufficient strength remaining to fire a musquet, and continued, as they lay on the ground, to give battle till they were pierced with wounds. At this juncture the order was given to charge, and the line advanced with cool determination. The enemy evinced a strong disposition to withstand it, and remained firm till Mina's infantry were within a few paces. This was the critical moment which was to decide the fate of the division. Mina's infantry, animated by their resolution to conquer or die, gave three cheers, and, pouring into the enemy a destructive volley of buck-shot, rushed upon them: they broke; and, throwing away their arms, fled with such precipitation, that a very few only were bayoneted. The cavalry, viewing with astonishment the fate of the infantry, partook of the terror; they dispersed, and fled in every direction. The general was unable to follow up his success, as the horses of the detachment from the cavalry, with him, were completely

worn down ; he, however, pursued the fugitives a short distance. Had Colonel Noboa been animated with the gallantry of Major Maylefer, who commanded the cavalry in the hacienda, not one of the enemy's infantry would have escaped. The major, anxious to signalize himself, repeatedly requested Colonel Noboa to allow him to share in the glory of the day, and to reinforce the general with the cavalry ; but, for some reason or other, he would not allow him ; and thus the enemy's infantry escaped annihilation.

It was supposed, that the enemy, after flying a reasonable distance, and not finding themselves pursued, would rally, and then return to the attack. The division was, in consequence, ordered to the hacienda, where it arrived, after having been warmly engaged three hours and a half. The troops returned in high spirits, each man feeling conscious of having not only done his duty, but that he had escaped the destruction which, a few hours before, appeared to await him. Never was any man welcomed with more heartfelt congratulations than those which Mina received from his troops : they rent the air with their cheers ; and even the wounded seemed almost insensible to suffering, amidst the general joy.

The first impulse of the little band, on being dismissed, was to fly to the meal which had been left in cooking : but, to their keen mortification, they found, that the cooks, feeling, as was natural, more interest in the fate of the battle, than in dressing the provisions, had deserted their trust. In their absence, the dogs of the hacienda had upset the pots; and had regaled themselves at the expence of the famished soldiers. Other provisions were speedily procured for cooking; but, in the mean time, an alarm was given, which, however, turned out to be unfounded.

Immediately on reaching the hacienda, the attention of the general was directed to the removal of the wounded from the field, and parties were sent out for that purpose, as well as to collect some of the fruits of the victory. Owing to the distance of the scene of action from the hacienda, and the want of the necessary means of conveyance, this duty was not finished till night had set in. Besides the wounded of the division, some of the enemy's were brought in also. From the same causes, only fifty stand of arms, one gun, three drums, some accoutrements, and eight mule loads of ammunition, were all that could be saved; of the latter, the enemy blew up a considerable quantity when they fled.

The return of the loss of the division was heavy, and a melancholy reduction from its strength. It was as follows:—

	OFFICERS.		RANK AND FILE.	
	<i>Killed.</i>	<i>Wounded.</i>	<i>Killed.</i>	<i>Wounded.</i>
Staff . . . . .	1	1	0	0
Guard of Honour . . .	8	7	0	0
Cavalry . . . . .	2	3	9	7
Regiment of the Union	0	0	6	7
First Regiment . . . .	0	0	4	0
Armed servants . . . .	0	0	0	1
	<hr/> 11	<hr/> 11	<hr/> 19	<hr/> 15

Total killed and wounded . . . . . 56

Among the killed was Don Lazaro Goñi, a native of Navarre; the general was much attached to him; he was beloved by the division, and had gallantly distinguished himself.

On the body of a lieutenant-colonel, killed in the action, was found the order of the day, which shewed that the force actually engaged was *six hundred and eighty infantry* of the European regiments of Estremadura and America, and eleven hundred of the Rio Verde and Sierra Gorda cavalry; and that the rear-guard consisted of three hundred men. This was subsequently corroborated by official docu-

ments, published at Mexico ; so that Mina, with one hundred and seventy-two fatigued infantry, and badly mounted cavalry, defeated, in a plain, without even the advantage of a good position, upwards of seventeen hundred men. The royalist soldiers, who fled from the field of battle, returned to their homes, and, in vindication of their own conduct, exaggerated the numbers and intrepidity of Mina's troops, who, they said, were not men, but devils ; and portrayed in melancholy colours the dreadful execution committed by their fire. The general's fame thus spread in every direction, and paralyzed the enemy.

The action of Peotillos is yet mentioned with shame and mortification by the royalists. It was blazoned through the kingdom, and particularly in the central provinces, where it is known to all ranks of people. It will long live in the recollection of the Mexicans ; and perhaps the day is not distant, when the Mexican people will offer to the memory of Mina, the honours due to the hero of Peotillos. This, and other actions and circumstances, have created in their minds a strong predilection, and great respect for foreigners : a circumstance which would be attended by the most astonishing results, should a body of them ever invade

the kingdom in the cause of its emancipation. If Mina, after this action, had had with him one thousand, instead of a hundred and fifty foreigners, he might have marched direct upon the capital of Mexico, and the royalist troops, instead of opposing him, would have flocked to his banners.

The battle of Peotillos incontestibly proves the quality and character of the royalist troops, and shews what a few determined foreigners can achieve against them at the point of the bayonet. This is not the only action which can be adduced in support of this assertion. That of Colonel Perry, near Soto la Marina, and that of El Valle de Maiz, already noticed, and those of Pinos and San Juan de los Llanos, yet to be mentioned, were all gained over a superiority of numbers; and it will be seen in the sequel, that Mina's division was cut up by the enormous force of five thousand men, whose efforts even then would have been unavailing, if their success had depended entirely upon their personal prowess. If these are not sufficient proofs of the awful fall of the Spaniards from their once lofty elevation in the records of military fame, let the reader revert to the history of their struggle against the Emperor Napoleon, and there he will find, that in

the central provinces of Spain, the French, with one-third their numbers, gained victories, and drove them from point to point, even after their armies were organized and disciplined.

The sanguinary style in which the order of the day, found as before-mentioned, was couched, roused the indignation of the division against its author. It expressly forbade quarter, and so sure was Armiñan of the victory, which his great superiority of numbers well authorized him to expect, that he exulted in having at length got the traitor Mina and his rabble (*gavilla*) into his power, not one of whom, the order said, should escape. It modestly pointed out the description of the plunder which was to belong to the king, and that which was to be distributed among his troops, whom it strictly enjoined not to stop the work of extermination, to plunder, but to wait till after the slaughter was finished, when a division of the spoils should be made. The Great Disposer of human events had ordained, that matters should not correspond with the savage principles and predictions of Colonel Armiñan. On the contrary, he received a merited punishment for his intended cruelties, by having his host put to flight by *one tenth* of its numbers. Armiñan, with his staff, fled several leagues from the



field of battle, before he deemed it safe to halt. His despatch to the commander of San Luis Potosi, was published in the Gazette of Mexico, and is a tolerably fair sample of all the royalist despatches, which have appeared in that paper during the revolution. It is a composition of so much absurdity, and is so palpably false, that the Spanish officers yet treat it with merited ridicule, and never touch upon the subject but with disgust. It is very brief, and sets out with saying, that he had encountered a column of men *determined to die killing*: he states, that *his cavalry took fright at something, and ran over his infantry, which threw them into disorder*; but that he *gained the battle*, and that he *only wanted two hundred more cavalry*, which he requested might be sent him, *to finish the total destruction of Mina*. He concludes this singular despatch, by saying, "*No hay mas papel*," "*I am out of paper*;" else, we presume, he would have communicated, for the information of the Mexican people, a few more falsehoods.

During the action, a trumpeter was made prisoner by a major of the enemy's cavalry. The major immediately forced him to dismount, and then gave him his carabine to carry. The trumpeter soon ascertained that it was loaded.

and when he found that the enemy's troops were in a state of confusion, he suddenly presented the carabine at the major, and peremptorily ordered him to dismount; he did so, and the trumpeter jumping into the saddle, ordered the major to march before him, observing to him, "As you are obliged to walk, sir, I'll not trouble you to carry the gun. So much pleased was the major with the manner in which he was treated, that, although Mina gave him his liberty, he subsequently joined a division of the patriots.

As the people of the hacienda had retired on the approach of the division, no emissary could be despatched, to obtain information of the enemy's situation. Mina knew, that ignorance of his force could not have been the cause of his signal victory, for the enemy had various opportunities of ascertaining it to a man; besides, they had taken one of the division prisoner the preceding evening, from whom they had undoubtedly gained every information. He therefore expected, that, feeling ashamed at having been beaten by so contemptible a number, they would make a desperate attempt to retrieve the disasters of Peotillos, and it was accordingly judged best to steal a march on the enemy. The division was, therefore, put in

light marching order, and the superfluous baggage was destroyed, to make room for the conveyance of the arms and ammunition taken from the enemy.

It has already been noticed, that some of the wounded of the enemy had been removed from the field, with those belonging to the division. Their wounds were dressed, and the same sympathy was extended to them as to those of Mina. The surgeon reported, that four of the division were so dangerously wounded, that it was impossible to remove them, and with reluctance the general was obliged to leave them. He, however, left a letter for the royalist commander, begging that he would pay the same attention to them, as had been shewn to his own wounded. The parting with these brave fellows was extremely painful. They shook the general and their companions cordially by the hand, and wished them success, while bidding them, as they conceived, an eternal adieu. We have great pleasure in recording the fact, which we afterwards learned, that Mina's request was most scrupulously fulfilled; they were removed by order of the royalist commander to San Luis Potosi, and were there treated in the most humane manner, particularly by the inhabitants.

Every thing being arranged, at two o'clock on the morning of the 16th, the division moved forward, and continued advancing till noon, when it arrived at a rancho. Here, intelligence was received of the complete defeat of the enemy; and, as the fear of pursuit from that quarter was now at an end, the division took up its quarters for the night. As the rancho afforded every thing necessary for their refreshment, the troops fared sumptuously.

The next morning, the march was resumed: but two officers, from some motive which could not be developed, remained in the rancho; they afterwards fell into the hands of the enemy. At sun-set, the division passed through the pueblo of *Hideonda*. Its priest ordered the bells to be rang, and gave other apparent demonstrations of joy, to celebrate, as he said, the result of the battle. He endeavoured to persuade the general that he was warmly attached to the patriotic cause: but his conduct, it afterwards appeared, was guided by the most profound dissimulation; his real object being to get rid of Mina in the safest way possible, and to obtain an exact account of his numbers. He afterwards boasted to the royalists, that he had counted Mina's troops as they remained formed, in the square.

It should not be inferred, however, from this instance of hypocrisy, that the clergy are averse, in general, to the cause of liberty, excepting that portion of them which first drew their breath in Spain. It is true, that the European priests, from interest and prejudice, have been, and ever will be, hostile to the independence of the New World; but the sweeping imputations which have been cast on the Spanish *American* clergy, are without the least foundation. To accuse the Creole priests of a want of *amor patriæ*, and an attachment to the interests of the Spanish government, could only arise from a total ignorance of their real character and situation. There is no part of the Mexican population which has more ample cause to desire, or in secret does more ardently pant after, a change of government, than its native clergy. The church preferments are regulated in an equally odious manner with the civil and military. No Creole, whatever claims he may have on the score of family, or however great his talents may be, can ever aspire to the mitre. The subordinate livings only are filled by Creoles; rare indeed are the instances of native divines attaining to any situation beyond that of a *cura* (rector of a parish), and even the most valuable of these livings are presented to old

Spaniards. Inequality of fortune among the clergy is here even more striking than among the other classes; and no country presents such contrasts of wealth and poverty, luxury and misery, as Mexico. While a large proportion of the curas suffer extreme poverty (many depending for subsistence entirely on the charity of their parishioners), the canons and bishops, and even some of the curas, roll in affluence and luxury. The Creole, once placed in a *curato*, lives and dies there unnoticed, unregarded; while he has the mortification to see daily arrivals from Spain of the refuse of the Spanish convents, who are destined to succeed to, and invariably monopolize, the clerical dignities and wealth.

The Mexican clergy are far less numerous than is generally supposed. According to a late enlightened traveller, M. de Humboldt, the secular clergy and regulars who wear the cowl do not exceed ten, and, including the lower orders attached to the convents, fourteen thousand; being about three for every thousand inhabitants. The kingdom is divided into one archbishopric and eight bishoprics. The revolution has materially reduced their incomes; but, prior to that event, the dignitaries received the following immense annual revenues:—

	Dollars
Archbishop of Mexico . . . . .	130,000
Bishop of La Puebla . . . . .	110,000
————— Valladolid . . . . .	100,000
————— Guadalajara . . . . .	90,000
————— Durango . . . . .	35,000
————— Monterey . . . . .	30,000
————— Yucatan . . . . .	20,000
————— Oaxaca . . . . .	18,000
————— Sonora . . . . .	6,000

The canons receive from seven to nine thousand dollars, and the sub-canons, from two to four thousand dollars, each.

The revenue of the church was derived principally from tithes. Its lands were in value about two and a half millions of dollars; and it held mortgages to an immense amount, about forty millions of dollars.

When it is considered, that these immense sums flow into the coffers of a comparatively few individuals, of whom by far the greater proportion are old Spaniards, to the exclusion of the natives of the country, can it be for a moment supposed, or is it consistent with human nature, that a class of men, of which the majority are so degraded, and so abused, should uphold, from sentiments of attachment to the *Madre Patria*, a government which thus op-

presses them? It is true, they have great power over their flocks, which they do not fail to exercise; but, as that dreadful engine of despotism, the Inquisition, has hitherto hung over their heads, and the civil government possesses all the physical force, which is always called forth in its aid, they are awed into subjection, and fear alone compels them to act a part, at which they would otherwise spurn. Were the clergy properly supported, they would soon convince the world that they are really patriots, and that the charges against them are foul aspersions.

In taking a retrospective view of their conduct, we find that the plan to drive despotism from Mexico was laid by *priests*: the father of the revolution (Hidalgo) was a *priest*. From the commencement, *priests* have held the first rank in the patriot armies: such were Morelos, Matamoros, and an infinite number of other distinguished members of the church. Those just mentioned, beside several hundreds of *priests*, have fallen victims, during the struggle for liberty; and there are yet many of the clergy acting with the revolutionists, in the intendancies of Mexico, Guanajuato, and Valladolid.

The next day's march brought the division to a very extensive hacienda, called *Espiritu Santo*. Being on the frontiers of the provinces



possessed by the patriots, and open to their incursions, the hacienda was fortified, and a garrison had been maintained at the owner's expense: but, not deeming it prudent to withstand an attack from the force which now approached, they had retreated to San Luis, having the proprietor, an European Spaniard, under their convoy. The majority of the male inhabitants had been compelled to depart; but the division was met, at the entrance of the hacienda, by a troop of females, bearing a picture of the Virgin, and chaunting hymns. Fearing the worst from victorious troops, and judging what would be the conduct of Mina, by what they had experienced from others in the same situation, they adopted this method; hoping, by the intercession of their tutelar saint, to awaken the compassion of the conqueror, and to obtain that clemency which was seldom extended to them. Their fears soon subsided; and, to their very great surprise, the soldiers, instead of plundering them, as had been customary with the contending parties, paid for whatever they required. The division bivouacked without the hacienda; rations were provided; and the next morning it moved forward.

By a forced march, the division reached the *Real de Pinos* at sun-set. The term *Real* im-

plies a place where mines are worked. This town is in the intendency of *Zacatecas*; is extensive and wealthy; and is situated on an ascent, partly surrounded by hills, out of which the precious minerals are extracted. It was fortified; being defended, on the hill side, by a very wide and deep trench, which was raked from breast-works built on the tops of the houses. On the side next the plain, the streets leading to the *Plaza Mayor* (principal square) were blocked up by a wall, calculated only to afford protection against musquetry, constructed with loop-holes, and strengthened by ditches. These would be unavailing against organized troops, as the heights completely command the place within musquet-shot. It had, however, been once invested by a body of fifteen hundred patriots, and had resisted their attacks.

At the time Mina appeared before Pinos, it contained a garrison of three hundred men. He summoned it to surrender, promising that respect should be paid to persons and property, and threatening the consequences that awaited its reduction by force. A refusal to this summons was returned; and Mina, thereupon, made preparations for storming the place. Soon after dark, parties were despatched to the different points of attack; and a smart

skirmishing was maintained on both sides, but without causing any loss to Mina. A little before midnight, a detachment of fifteen men from the Union was ordered up to reenforce a party of the first regiment. At that point, the houses were low, and afforded a communication from their terraces with the Plaza Mayor, extending some distance into the rear of the enemy's works. The small party of fifteen men, anxious to distinguish themselves, immediately mounted the terraces, and unobserved, as the night was dark, proceeded along them in silence. Arrived at the square, they lowered themselves down by their blankets; where, by the light of the torches of the enemy, they saw the reserve under arms, with five pieces of artillery: they advanced upon them, as long as they could do so unperceived, then gave their usual three cheers, and rushed on the enemy with the bayonet. They were completely surprised, and, each one seeking his own safety in flight, abandoned the place without farther resistance. Thus Pinos was carried, with the loss of one man. As the place had refused to surrender on honourable terms, and as it was taken by storm, Mina, in conformity with the laws of war, gave it up to be plundered; but, at the same time, charged the troops not to commit any act of personal

violence. Large sums in specie were found by the troops, many of whom obtained more treasure than they could find means to carry away. They amply supplied themselves with clothing, which they much needed ; few leaving the place without a richly embroidered cloak thrown over the shoulders, worth from one to two hundred dollars, and in many instances far more costly. A considerable magazine of military stores was also found here.

One of the soldiers of the Union regiment had entered a church, and was detected in the act of purloining the golden ornaments belonging to the altar. The general had always given the most positive orders to his troops, to respect all places dedicated to divine worship ; and had declared his firm determination to punish with death whoever was found committing any act of sacrilege. On a former occasion, at Soto la Marina, he had caused a Creole to be shot, for breaking into a church at Palo Alto. He therefore, on being informed of the circumstance, immediately directed the soldier to be taken out to the front of the division, and there shot : thus proving to the royalists, that the men whom they called heretics, and whom they had represented to the people as sacrilegious plunderers, paid more respect to the sanctuaries of religion than themselves ; for the royalist troops,

throughout the revolution, had invariably polluted the churches, by using them as fortifications, barracks, and stables, whenever it suited their purposes. They have, on several occasions, despoiled cathedrals and convents of immense quantities of silver ornaments, and converted them into specie. It would not therefore, have been surprising had the patriots followed this example; but, to their honour be it said, they were more scrupulous in these matters than their enemies. In various parts of the province of Guanajuato, were seen churches in ruins, which the inhabitants had razed to the ground, rather than that they should be applied to the purposes of fortifications.

On the afternoon of the 19th, the general, after releasing on parole those who had fallen into his hands, evacuated Pinos, carrying with him a part of the trophies of his late victory, consisting of a stand of colours, four guns, several stands of arms, a large quantity of ammunition, clothing, and accoutrements; but, for want of mules to remove them, fifteen cases of ammunition, two guns (after being spiked), and several other articles, were thrown into a well.

It was expected that the long-looked-for junction with the patriots of the interior, would be formed in a few days. The road now traversed one of those extensive arid plains, with

which the intendancy of Zacatecas abounds. A number of ruined houses, and quantities of human bones scattered here and there, gave an air of desolation to the scene, and indicated that the country had suffered severely by revolutionary ravages. For three days, the division marched through this solitary region; and, as every thing had been laid waste, neither human being nor beast were visible. No provisions were to be procured: but, fortunately, the plain was covered with grass, which afforded the horses superabundant forage, and enabled them to go over much ground daily.

After dark, on the 22d, the guide became bewildered as to the road, and the division halted. It had been three days with scarcely any nourishment; and, to render its situation more distressing, there was no prospect of immediate relief. Early the next morning, an officer, with a small escort of cavalry, was ordered to advance, and seek for habitations. He had not proceeded far, when he fell in with a small party of *patriots*, who were reconnoitring. The detachment being well uniformed, and as the patriots had not heard any thing of Mina's approach, they supposed the division to be hostile, and commenced firing. It was with difficulty the officer could bring them to a parley;

which having accomplished, and remaining himself as a hostage, a few of the patriots came down to the division. The joy of the troops, on having at length, after surmounting so many obstacles, joined their allies, may readily be imagined. Every man, in his rejoicings, forgot his past sufferings, and contemplated with pleasure the field of glory which he supposed was in consequence about to be opened to him. The general immediately set off to meet and pay his respects to the commandant of his allies, Lieutenant-Colonel *Don Christoval Naba*; and, in the course of the forenoon, the general, with the lieutenant-colonel, returned to the encampment.

The grotesque figure of the colonel surprised the division. He wore a threadbare roundabout brown jacket, decorated with a quantity of tarnished silver lace, and a red waistcoat; his shirt collar, fancifully cut and embroidered, was flying open, and a black silk handkerchief was hanging loosely round his neck. He also wore a pair of short, loose, rusty, olive-coloured velvet breeches, also decorated with lace; and round his legs were wrapped a pair of dressed deer-skins, tied under the knee by a garter. He had on a pair of country-made shoes; and on each heel was a tremendous iron spur, inlaid

with silver, weighing near a pound, with rowels four inches in diameter. On his head was placed a country-made hat, with an eight-inch brim, ornamented with a broad silver band, in the front of which was stuck a large picture of the Virgin of Guadalupe, inclosed in a frame, and protected by a glass. He was mounted on a fine horse, and armed with a brace of pistols, a Spanish Toledo, and an immensely long lance. His men were equipped much in the same style; but were principally clad and armed with the spoils taken from the enemy. Though these Mexican Cossacks were thus singularly and rudely equipped, they were robust-looking fellows, accustomed to hardships and severe privations, and full of courage.

The district under the command of Don Christoval was poor, which accounted for his appearance: but in the rich districts, although the patriot officers are clothed in the same style the colonel was (which, by the way, is the costume of the Mexican peasantry, and is far from unbecoming), yet they expend vast sums on their dress, and the equipage of their horses. Many of the troops are well uniformed, agreeably to their taste. The officers are literally covered with gold and silver buttons, lace, and embroidery; and, to protect them from the wea-



ther, they wear a cloak, called "*mangas*," richly adorned with gold lace. They mount superb horses, which are generally richly caparisoned : the head-stalls of the bridles are covered with silver ; that part of the saddle-tree which shews itself, is mounted with silver ; and the saddle is richly and elegantly embroidered with gold and silver thread : many of the latter cost from one to three hundred dollars. Some of the commandants run into the extremes of extravagance, in respect to their appearance ; but the generality, except in the very poor districts, are richly and handsomely clothed.

Mina learned from Don Christoval, that at five leagues distance was a national rancho, and that four leagues farther was the national fort called *Sombrero*. This was cheering intelligence ; and the troops resumed their march in high spirits.

After dark, on the preceding evening, Lieutenant Porter was unfortunately lost. In the morning, he was made prisoner by the royalists, and sent to the town of *Lagos*.

While the division was ascending the heights of Ybarra, a strong body of the enemy were seen in the plain below. Their appearance was as unexpected as unwelcome, to the exhausted troops. As Mina expected they would bring

him to action, he took the necessary measures to act on the defensive; and there is little doubt, that had the enemy attacked him, his troops, flushed as they were with recent victory, and elated by being so near their allies, would have given him a warm reception. But, for reasons inexplicable to the division, the enemy declined a combat, and allowed Mina to reach the rancho unmolested. There the troops found plenty of food provided by their friends, which constituted a rich repast to men who had fasted for four days.

The enemy were encamped in a ruined hacienda, only two leagues distant from the division, and the next morning proceeded to the *Villa de Leon*. They consisted of a battalion of the European regiment of Navarre, and cavalry, seven hundred strong, under the command of *Don Francisco de Orrantia*, who, it appeared, had been ordered, after the defeat at Peotillos, from the city of *Queretaro*, to prevent Mina's junction with the patriots. The manner in which he obeyed his orders is here seen. Orrantia will become a conspicuous figure in our subsequent pages, and it will be perceived that his future conduct exactly corresponded with his behaviour in this instance. The true cause of his declining an action with Mina,

may be attributed to the respectful awe he entertained for that general.

Orrantia is one among the many Spaniards, sent to seek their fortunes in the colonies, without education or principle. It is by this class of Spaniards that the unfortunate Creoles have been so dreadfully oppressed, in every part of the New World. He soon became opulent; and was, and is yet, the owner of a large store in the town of *San Miguel el Grande*, where he carries on a lucrative business. When the revolution broke out, he became a soldier; and his sanguinary enormities towards defenceless men, women, and children, recommended him to the then royal authorities, and he was promoted to the rank of colonel.

The officer who had remained with Don Christoval Naba as a hostage, and was sent on to his commanding officer, *Don Pedro Moreno*, the commandant of Sombrero, after having exhibited his commission to Don Pedro, received from that commander an invitation for the general, welcoming him, and requesting that the division might be marched to the fort. At the same time, Don Pedro sent despatches to the patriot government, announcing the happy event, and the intelligence soon spread in every direction.

The general, with the staff, early on the morning of the 24th, proceeded to the fort. The division moved on soon after, and arrived at noon at the patriot fortress, where they were received with the most cordial demonstrations of joy. The patriots viewed the division with astonishment, and could scarcely believe it possible that such a handful of men could have penetrated so great a distance to the interior, and through a country occupied by the royalists in every part of the route.

The division had been *thirty days* on the march, and had gone over a tract of *two hundred and twenty leagues*. It was harassed a considerable distance by the enemy, from which cause, and from the nature of the marches, no regular supplies of provisions could be procured. Frequently two, sometimes three, and even four days had elapsed, without rations: and in no instance did the division, except in El Valle de Maiz, procure more than one meal a day, and that of beef only; fighting, during these scenes of privation and fatigue, two severe battles, and taking one town. The troops bore up against these hardships with cheerfulness, on observing that their leader fared like themselves, and in the hour of danger was invariably at their head, cheering them on.

The privations which the division suffered, did not arise from any physical want of means in that part of Mexico to support an army, but from the circumstances of the general being constrained to pursue the most unfrequented paths; and the constant and rapid marches which his situation obliged him to make, frequently not allowing him time to refresh his troops, except by a few hours sleep; which the troops generally preferred to employing the time in cooking. If Mina's force had been strong enough to have allowed him to advance by the high road, the division would have fared differently; for few countries can afford more provisions for an army than Mexico, particularly of animal food. A few leagues from the sea-coast, where there is scarcely any population, bread is difficult to be obtained; but soon afterwards, an army reaches a delightful country, tolerably well settled, enjoying a fine climate, and where, in the towns, wheaten bread can always be procured.

By looking over M. le Baron de Humboldt's chart, the only correct one extant, it will be seen, that the distance by the king's highway (*camino real*), from Soto la Marina to Sombrero, is not more than half the distance before mentioned, but Mina's peculiar situation obliged

him to take circuitous routes, which can be seen by tracing the march on the maps.

The following is the return made by Colonel Npoa, of the strength of the division, on its arrival at Sombrero:—

The general and staff . . . . .	10
Guard of Honour . . . . .	23
Cavalry . . . . .	109
Regiment of the Union . . . . .	46
First regiment of the line . . . . .	59
Artillerists . . . . .	5
Armed servants . . . . .	12
Ordinanzas . . . . .	5
Total . . . . .	269

Of these, twenty-five were wounded ; and the loss, in killed, and prisoners taken by the enemy on the road, amounted to thirty-nine. When it is considered that the division marched through so great an extent of the enemy's country, enduring severe privations and sufferings, for thirty days, it will appear almost incredible, that under such circumstances, besides fighting two battles, and carrying by storm one town, the loss sustained should have been so trifling. It affords a criterion, which will enable the reader

to judge of the skill and enterprise of Mina, and of the good conduct of his officers and men. It also incontestibly proves the distracted state of the royalists; and at once solves any queries that might arise, as to the probability of two thousand troops operating with success. Into what other country, we ask, boasting, as the Royal Mexican government does, of the attachment of six millions of people to the king, and supported, as they say, by 60,000 troops, could 300 men penetrate 200 leagues, and arrive within 80 of the capital, without meeting, at the outset, with extermination? No comment is needful to display the critical situation of the royalists; this circumstance alone speaks sufficiently clearly.

The following munitions of war were brought away, after the different affairs:—

	Cannon.	Musquets.	Swords.	Lances.	Colours.	Drums.	Carriage Boxes.	Uniforms.	Caps.	Boxes of Ammunition	Flints.
ACTION AT EL VALLE DE MAIZ.	4	8	10	50	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
ACTION AT PEOTILLOS.	1	50	0	0	0	3	18	0	0	8	0
CAPTURE OF SIERRA DE PINOS	4	38	20	50	1	1	34	60	60	7	400
TOTAL	9	96	30	100	1	4	52	60	60	18	400

A much larger quantity would have been obtained, if time had allowed their collection, or if mules could have been procured to transport them: from the want of the latter, in Pinos alone, fifteen boxes of ammunition, two guns, and other articles, were thrown down a well. Trifling, however, as these trophies were, the impression they produced on the patriots rendered them of great importance. Not one of the patriot officers had ever heard of Mina, nor had either they or the soldiers ever seen a foreigner; consequently, they judged of the merits of the division by the battles won, and spoils brought into the fort.

The downfall of the Spanish government in Mexico, was an event now viewed by the patriots as near at hand, and the whole country held by them presented a scene of rejoicing.

The government of Mexico, at no period since the commencement of the revolution, had been in a situation so critical and embarrassing. It had calculated that the forces under Arredondo, Armiñan and others, would have been sufficient to have annihilated Mina; but when they learned that he had actually formed a junction with the patriots, they began to tremble for the consequences. They were conscious, that it would have been impossible for him to



have penetrated so far into the interior of the country, with so inconsiderable a body of men; if the inhabitants had not secretly favoured his progress ; and they were aware, from the results of the battles, that their own troops could not be relied upon for fidelity or valour. They were, besides, not ignorant of the fact, that Mina was well known and popular among the European troops then in Mexico ; and consequently that there was a risk of disaffection spreading among that class of the soldiery. These reflections and fears, on the part of the authorities in the city of Mexico, were well founded : and there is no doubt existing in the mind of the writer, that if Mina had found the patriots concentrated, and in such numbers as he had calculated on ; or, scattered as they were, if they had embraced and zealously co-operated in his plans, he would have been enabled, not only to have resisted any force the royalists could have brought against him, but in all probability, to have conducted his enterprise to a successful issue. This opinion will be strongly supported by facts which will be related in the sequel.

The first objects of the general, on entering Sombrero, were to lay his services at the feet of the government, and to write to *Padre Torres*,

a neighbouring chieftain, who bore the title of commander-in-chief. He also circulated his manifesto.

The fort was commanded by Don Pedro Moreno, mariscal de campo,\* and had a garrison of about eighty infantry, and a few cavalry, tolerably well clothed and armed. Don Pedro had also under his orders a body of about two hundred cavalry, commanded by *Don Encarnacion Ortiz*, who traversed the country in the vicinity of Sombrero.

Fort Sombrero, called by the royalists *Comanja*, was situated on the mountain of that name, about eighteen leagues north-west of the city of Guanaxuato, in the intendency of that name; from Lagos, in the intendency of Guadalajara, east-south-east, about five; and from the *Villa de Leon*, north-east, six leagues. It was a rudely fortified neck of land, about five hundred paces long, stretching north and south, and elevated above the plain of Leon about one thousand feet. At the north end, there was a narrow ridge or causeway, skirted by precipices, connecting the neck of land which formed the

\* The Spanish grades, which are also observed by the patriots, are—from a colonelcy to brigadier; brigadier to mariscal de campo; thence to lieutenant-general, and finally to captain-general.

fort with a chain of hills, one of which completely commanded it within long musquet-shot. This alone rendered the fort untenable against any regular attack ; but, as Moreno had successfully repulsed the royalists in one attempt made by them to enter it, he considered it a very strong hold. On the east side, the fort was separated from the mountains by a very deep and wide *barranca* (ravine). At the south end, the declivity of the hill was very steep ; and on the west side was a bold descent to the plain. From the south end, at a less elevation than the fort, two narrow ridges extended out into the plain. Across the end of the causeway next to the fort, where it was about fifty paces wide, a miserably constructed wall had been run. It was flanked by two ill-planned one-gun batteries, which raked the greatest part of the causeway, and the declivity of the hill in front, but could not enfilade the ditch. This was the only regular entrance into the fort. In its rear was a conical hill, crowned by a work of one gun, which commanded the causeway. From the entrance, for some distance along the fort, it was naturally defended by perpendicular rocks and precipices ; and beyond them, at the south or lower end, as it was called, it was artificially strengthened by a low wall, built of loose stones ;

but its real defence at this place, which was bad enough, consisted in the steepness of the hill. Seventeen pieces of crooked, rough, and misshapen artillery, from two to eight pounders, were mounted on various parts of the fort. The commandant's house, magazines, hospitals, and the greater part of the soldiers' dwellings—barracks there were none—were built on the south side of the conical hill; some grass huts were also standing at the lower end, and crammed in amongst the rocks in various parts of the fort. The greatest of all its defects was, the want of water, the garrison depending on a supply from a brook (*arroyo*), which ran through the bottom of the ravine, at a distance of nearly eight hundred paces from the fort. At the time the division entered the fort, it did not contain a week's provisions, and in every point of view it was badly calculated to resist any serious attack.

Having conducted the general to the accomplishment of one of his most important objects, the formation of a junction with the patriots; we must, before we proceed with the narrative of Mina's exploits, resume the memoirs of the Mexican revolution, in order to shew in a clear point of view the then distracted and miserable state of the insurgents, and the insurmountable

obstacles the general had to contend with, from the gross ignorance, ambition, inactivity, and want of principle, in many of their leaders at that epoch, which in fact were the immediate causes of the failure of Mina's enterprise, and of the melancholy termination of his career.

## CHAPTER V.

*Reflections on the state of the Revolution after the dispersion of the Congress—General Don Manuel Mier y Teran—His talent and enterprise—His fall—General Don Guadalupe Victoria—General Osourno—General Don Ignacio Rayón—General Don José Antonio Torres—Degraded state of the Patriots after the latter assumed the command—Reflections thereon.*

**WE** have already mentioned the dissolution of the Mexican Congress at Tehuacan by General Teran, and the dispersion of its members over the different revolted provinces. Although they subsequently made various attempts to re-establish themselves, yet they never succeeded in forming any civil government, meriting that name. The different military commandants were thus uncontrouled by any civil authority; and hence arose a long and fatal train of disasters to the patriot cause, terminating as might be expected, in a scene of anarchy among themselves, and of triumph to the royalists. The patriot chiefs who gave the royalists the

most uneasiness and trouble, after the abolition of the Congress, were *Teran*, in the district of Tehuacan; *Victoria*, in the province of Vera Cruz; *Osourno*, in the district of Papantla, in the province of Mexico; and *Rayon*, at the fort of Copero, in the province of Valladolid. There were other chiefs, whose names and operations we shall have occasion to notice; but on the conduct of the four just mentioned, during the year 1816 and the beginning of 1817, rested the fate of the Mexican revolution.

If those four individuals had discarded from their breasts the ambition and jealousy, which unfortunately had become the ruling passions with each of them, then would the patriot cause have triumphed; because the concentration of their forces, and a cordial co-operation in one grand system of action would have enabled them to contend with any army that the royalists could at that time have brought against them.

*Teran* had under his command fifteen hundred men, tolerably well armed and disciplined; *Victoria*, about the same number, well equipped; *Osourno*, about two thousand, principally cavalry, the finest in the kingdom; *Rayon* and his brother had about eighteen hundred, in tolerable discipline. There were, besides, in the mountains of *Misteca*, under the valiant

chief Guerrero, at least one thousand good cavalry.

The three first-named chiefs were within *twenty leagues of each other*, and could at any time have formed a junction in *three days*. Rayón who was at the greatest distance, could have united his forces with the patriots in the Baxio, or great plains of Guanaxuato; and menacing Mexico on that side, while the forces under Teran, Victoria, and Osourno, approached the capital on the other, the royalists would have been placed in a situation more alarming than any which had occurred since the beginning of the revolution. The plan just mentioned was the favourite object of Teran, who spared no exertions to effect it. The writer has perused the correspondence between Teran and the other chiefs, and he does not hesitate to aver, that nothing but the fatal jealousy which they entertained against Teran, was the cause of the junction in question not taking place.

In order to shew the precarious situation of the royalists at that time, we have only to recount the great difficulties they experienced in subduing the patriot chiefs, notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which the latter were suffering, from want of arms, and concert in their operations.



General Don Manuel Mier y Teran was a youth of only twenty years of age. He had received the best education which the city of Mexico could give him ; was allied to a distinguished family ; was modest in his demeanour ; of temperate habits ; an ardent advocate for the emancipation of his country ; generous and brave, with a mind possessing extraordinary strength.

This youth, with a force which on no occasion actually exceeded *fifteen hundred* men, held the city and district of Tehuacan, in the very centre of the Mexican kingdom, bidding defiance to the royal armies, and repelling their attacks, for more than two years.

He built a fort on a high mountain in the vicinity of the city of Tehuacan, and there established his arsenal, a cannon foundry, and a manufactory of powder. Whenever he was pressed by a greatly superior royal army, he retired to his fort, called Cerro Colorado, and baffled all their exertions to dislodge him.

He was particularly attentive in establishing discipline among his troops, and almost daily performed in person the duties of a drill officer. There were no troops during the revolution, of whom the royalists stood so much in awe, as those of Teran's division. Such was their de-

vation to him, that he could lead them to combat against far superior numbers; and when he did not gain the victory, he conducted his retreat with so much skill, as to prevent the royalists from ever causing him much loss.

The city of Tehuacan being situated in the heart of a beautiful wheat country, of course Teran had abundance of provisions. The district is thickly populated, and he could at any time have easily embodied ten thousand men; could he have procured arms for them. The few musquets among his troops were daily diminishing, and in the early part of 1816, he foresaw, that it would be impossible for him to keep his position much longer, unless he could obtain a fresh supply of arms. Frequently has the author heard him exclaim, while his fine black eyes glistened with tears, "*Ah! if I had but six thousand musquets, and three thousand cavalry swords to arm the brave youths that are daily flocking to my standard, I would establish my country's independence, even without the aid of those patriot chiefs, who are now refusing to act in concert with me.*" So great was his anxiety to obtain musquets, that he solicited Victoria and Osourno to co-operate with him in a plan to seize Tampico, or some port to the northward of Vera Cruz, for the purpose of

opening a trade with the United States. But his overtures being sullenly rejected, he boldly determined to proceed through the province of Oaxaca, penetrate to the southward of the province of Vera Cruz, and seize on the port of Guasacualco. It is difficult to convey to the reader a proper idea of the obstacles which Teran had to surmount in this enterprise ; but it is certain, that the great object he had in view justified his making the attempt ; and it is likewise certain, that his not succeeding in that extraordinary and important project, was owing to accidental circumstances, and not to the valour of his enemies. Having formed this determination, he departed in the month of July, 1816, from Tehuacan. His force consisted of *two hundred and forty infantry, sixty cavalry, and two pieces of artillery, with twenty boxes of ammunition.* He was well aware, that he had to pass through an enemy's country, thickly populated, and that the royalists might bring fifteen hundred or two thousand men to act against him ; but he was in hopes, that by making a rapid march, he should in ten or twelve days reach his place of destination, before the enemy could have time to concentrate their forces, or to penetrate his designs.

He had likewise reason to believe, that the

great body of the Indian and Creole population of the province of Oaxaca would rise up in his favour, or at all events would throw no obstacle in his way. He knew that if he once reached Guasacualco, he could take it with ease; and by strengthening its fortifications, he presumed it would be difficult for the enemy afterwards to dislodge him from his position. He had received unequivocal information, that the inhabitants in the vicinity of *Guasacualco* and *Tabasco* were ready to join him. He knew that the people of *Tehuantepec*, on the Pacific Ocean, were ripe for revolt against the Spanish government, and as the distance across the country from Guasacualco to Tehuantepec, was only about forty leagues, he would, by occupying those places, have two important sea-ports; one on the *Mexican Gulf*, and the other on the *Pacific Ocean*. It was his intention, in case he succeeded in taking *Guasacualco*, to have immediately withdrawn his whole force from *Tehuacan*, and established his head-quarters either on the coast of the gulf, or at *Tehuantepec*. It therefore appears, that notwithstanding his friends and enemies considered his project, at that time, quixotic and impracticable, yet, when it is examined with deliberation and an unprejudiced eye, it was not merely a plan dic-

tated by necessity, but the wisest under all circumstances, that Teran could have adopted in favour of his country.

The only error of which this enterprising youth can be justly accused, in relation to that expedition is, that he started from Tehuacan in the month of July, instead of June.

The rainy season usually commences in the beginning of July in Oaxaca; in a few days the rivers swell, and the great plain extending along the sea-coast of the province of Vera Cruz, to more than one hundred miles from the ocean, becomes absolutely impassable for an army. Teran was not ignorant of this fact; but when some of his friends told him it was too late in the season to make the attempt, he replied, " That he had known some years when the rains did not set in until the middle of August; that at that moment the whole country was perfectly dry; that he only wanted ten days more of dry weather to reach his intended point; that he was in hopes the God of nature would not defeat his project; that if it was delayed, he could not put it into execution until the next year; and finally, that if he did not succeed, he calculated on being able to return to Tehuacan, before the enemy could take measures to cut off his retreat."

In fact, so determined was he on making the experiment, that all the arguments used to dissuade him from it were unavailing ; and accordingly, he left Tehuacan, with the force before mentioned, about the 24th of July.

He met with little opposition during the first five days of his march. He took the towns of *Soyaltepec*, *Iscatlan*, *Oxitlan*, and several other places of considerable importance, some of them containing a population of from five to seven thousand Indians. They received him in the most cordial manner, and hoisted the flag of the Mexican republic wherever he appeared. The different skirmishes he had with some divisions of royal troops, convinced him that he had little to fear from their opposition. He proceeded without interruption to a place called *Tustepec*, about half-way to the place of his destination. His progress was there impeded by a violent rain, which continued without any intermission (except for about two hours each morning) for ten days. Not only was the whole country between *Tustepec* and *Guasacualco* inundated, but the greater part of the route he had marched was likewise overflown ; so that even a retreat back to Tehuacan was not practicable at that time. Thus hemmed in at *Tustepec*, he had to depend on the good offices

of the Indians for provisions for his army. In this he was not disappointed. They gave him ample testimony of their fidelity to the patriot cause, and of their hatred to the royalists. They sent out spies to discover the movements of the enemy, and soon procured Teran information, from the cities of Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, which convinced him that his designs were now known to the royalists, and also that they were making formidable preparations, as well to impede his progress to Guasacualco, as to cut off his return to Tehuacan. Teran was not dismayed by this intelligence, and only regretted that the incessant rains prevented him from moving either to the right or left.

Some intelligent Indians at Tustepec informed him, that if he could reach a place called *Amistan*, about eight leagues distant, he would then get into a road upon which it was practicable to proceed towards Guasacualco, even during the rainy season; but that, to get to *Amistan* at that time, it was necessary to cut a new road. No sooner did Teran receive this suggestion, than he called together the governor and principal Indians of Tustepec, requesting their advice touching the opening of this new road. They represented it to be a difficult task, but offered to afford him all their aid to accom-

plish it. Accordingly, two hundred men of Teran's division, with all the able-bodied Indians of Tustepec, began the undertaking. They completed, in ten days, a road, leading through swamps, which the royalists afterwards acknowledged to be a work that appeared to them impossible to have been executed in less than six months. Teran superintended the whole of the operations; and his indefatigable exertions, united with his ingenuity, excited the admiration of his soldiers, as well as of the Indians. Causeways and floating bridges were thrown over places which before had been considered as entirely impassable; proving what men can accomplish, when urged by necessity, and stimulated by an enterprising leader.

On the 5th of September, he reached Amistan, with his whole force. He there learned that the royalists were preparing to attack him, and were actually advancing, with a powerful force, towards Tustepec, under an impression that it was impossible for him to have proceeded any further on his route to Guasacualco. Five leagues from Amistan was a royalist post, called *Playa Vicente*, situated on a river. At this post there was a valuable deposit of cochineal and dry goods, belonging to the merchants of Vera Cruz and Oaxaca, which Teran immedi-



ately resolved to seize upon. On the 6th he reconnoitred the place, and ascertained that the enemy had a force there of about one hundred men. On the 7th he advanced with the division to the bank of the river, immediately opposite to Playa Vicente. On the 8th, in the morning, a canoe came from the opposite side, with two Indians, who informed Teran that the royalists had, the preceding night, precipitately abandoned the village. To ascertain the truth of their report, Teran kept one of the Indians as a hostage, and sent the other, with two of his own soldiers, across the river in the canoe. On their return, they confirmed the intelligence. Some of Teran's officers then volunteered to pass the river, which he imprudently permitted. They came back with such flattering accounts of the immense quantity of dry goods and cochineal, which they had seen in the stores, that the whole division were eager to gain possession of the place. As there was but one small canoe, Teran ordered rafts to be made, to transport the whole of his force across, in the evening, or the next morning.

In the mean time, the canoe had taken over about twenty men; when Teran, fearing that they might commit some excesses among the inhabitants, or indulge too freely in the wines

and brandies which were in the stores, crossed the river, and joined them himself, with three of his officers. He was making the necessary dispositions in the village, by posting sentinels at the doors of the warehouses, and endeavouring to gain the good-will of the inhabitants, when suddenly an Indian, running into the place, gave the alarm that the Gachupins were upon them. Teran was in hopes that it might prove a false alarm; but, with great presence of mind, ordered his little party, consisting of *twenty-three officers and soldiers*, to form, and follow him. They proceeded to that part of the village upon which the royalists were said to be approaching, and there beheld a body of cavalry and infantry descending a hill, within two hundred yards of them.

Teran, at that moment, might have fled to the river; and such of his men as could swim, might have saved themselves. But whether he supposed that the enemy's force was less than it proved to be, or thought that by a display of firmness he should be able to check them until he could receive a reenforcement from the other side of the river, are points upon which we can give no opinion; it is certain, however, that he took post in the rear of a small house, and there gallantly sustained the attack of the enemy.

The royalists appeared several times disposed to retreat: but, seeing that Teran received no reenforcement, and observing at length that the main body was on the other side of the river, they made a bold effort, and broke into the little band. He and two others were so fortunate as to reach the river, which they crossed amidst a shower of bullets, by swimming. All the rest of the party were bayoneted, or taken prisoners.

On the 9th, Teran made his dispositions for transporting his force to the other side of the river, about two hundred paces below the village, with the determination to attack it, and take revenge for the serious misfortune he had encountered. At five o'clock in the afternoon, he issued orders for the division to prepare for embarking on the rafts; his two field-pieces being placed on the largest one, so as to cover the landing. When every thing was ready for the attack on Playa Vicente, it was suddenly suspended, by unexpected intelligence, brought by an Indian from Amistan, that the royalists were within two leagues of that place, and intended to force their march, so as to be able to reach Teran's encampment by day-light next morning.

Teran at once perceived his critical situation,

and knew that if he remained where he then was until the enemy came up, it would animate the royalists in Playa Vicente, and place him between two fires. As soon, therefore, as it was night, he broke up his encampment, and marched about three leagues, until he came to an excellent position for mounting his two field-pieces. He had scarcely time to make preparations for battle, when the approach of a party of cavalry announced that the enemy were near. One of Teran's sentinels hailed them, at the same time discharging his musquet. This was a circumstance totally unexpected to them, as they had been positively assured by spies, that at the close of the preceding day Teran was at the river: however, they conceived it prudent to halt until day-light. In the mean time Teran was improving every minute. He knew that the enemy's force principally consisted of cavalry, and therefore threw obstacles in the road, by cutting down trees, and filling the path with bushes; behind which he placed troops, with the field-pieces, in ambush. We have understood from several royal officers, who subsequently examined the ground, and the arrangements which Teran had made, that it was scarcely credible so much could have been executed, in the short space of four hours, by a division of two hundred and seventy-five men.

About half an hour before day-break, Teran visited each of his ambuscades, entreating his men not to fire precipitately, and to remain steady at the posts assigned them. He obliged each officer and soldier to promise him, that in no event would they become prisoners, but die or conquer. He did not conceal from them, that he was aware the enemy were far superior in numbers; but declared that he felt confident of defeating them, if the republican division would only behave as they had frequently before done. No body of men, perhaps, ever had greater confidence in a chief, than this division reposed in Teran. They anticipated the victory they were about to gain, and the surprise and confusion which would be occasioned to the enemy, by the novel dispositions which Teran had made.

At day-break, the royalists were discovered, at the distance of about half a mile. A stream of water lay between them and Teran; and, although it was not more than twenty yards in width, yet it was deep, and difficult to pass, from the rapidity of the current. On approaching it, the royalists halted, and seemed cautious in their movements; but, after about an hour's delay, they crossed it. In the mean time, Teran, with about thirty men, had advanced to

meet them, intending to feign a hasty retreat, and thereby draw the enemy into the ambushes which had been laid. This stratagem succeeded: their cavalry pursued him, at full speed, into the ambuscade, until they reached the place where the two masked field-pieces were stationed. From these a destructive fire was commenced, which threw them into confusion, and compelled them to retire towards the rivulet. But it was now too late to retreat: they were entrapped; and, at a given signal, the parties in ambush opened their fire, charged, and in a few minutes completely routed the enemy. In attempting to pass the ford of the creek, the fugitives so crowded on each other, that many were drowned. Teran, promptly availing himself of these circumstances, closely pursued the enemy for nearly a league on the other side of the creek, making a dreadful havoc among their infantry, as well as cavalry. In vain the officers of the royalists attempted to rally their men; the panic became general, and every one endeavoured to save himself by flight.

The result of this action was, on the part of the royalists, *one hundred and twenty killed*, a considerable number wounded, and sixty prisoners. Teran's loss was nine killed, and thirteen wounded. It appeared, from official do-

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cuments found on the prisoners, that the royalist force consisted of *six hundred cavalry*, and *five hundred and sixty-three infantry*, commanded by General *Topete*. They had been several weeks collecting this force, at *Tlacotalpan* and *Alvarado*, in the province of Vera Cruz ; but, in consequence of the heavy rains, were unable to meet with Teran at an earlier period.

Teran obtained from the prisoners such information as compelled him, reluctantly, to abandon his project of proceeding to Guasacualco. He learned, that the commandant-general of Oaxaca was collecting all the disposable force of the province, in order to pursue him ; that another formidable expedition was preparing at Vera Cruz, for the same purpose ; and that two Spanish vessels of war had been sent to Guasacualco. As his original plan had been to seize the place by surprise, and this being now no longer practicable, he resolved on endeavouring to get back to Tehuacan as early as possible. This he effected, by masterly movements ; eluding all the plans of the royalists to intercept him, and overcoming obstacles which his enemies had considered insurmountable at that season of the year.

After his return to Tehuacan, he renewed his overtures for conciliation and co-operation

with Victoria and Osourno; but neither the one nor the other would assent to his proposals.

The viceroy Apodaca now bent all his energies to destroy these rival chiefs, first directing his attention to Teran. An army, composed of the flower of the royal forces, and consisting of about four thousand troops, was despatched to invest Tehuacan.

Teran prepared for the attack, with his usual alacrity. He sent the women and children to fort Colorado, and remained in the city, hoping that he might be able to repel the enemy. He fortified the convent of *San Francisco*, and there awaited the attack. The royalists surrounded the convent, and cut off the communication with the fort of Colorado. The whole effective force of Teran, in the convent, did not exceed five hundred men; but he had made such admirable preparations for defence, that the royalists did not venture to assault the place; contenting themselves by waiting the result of a formal siege, and cutting off all supplies of provisions. Teran, finding himself thus straitened, and his provisions and water being nearly exhausted, seeing no hopes of external relief, and at the same time not wishing to sacrifice uselessly the lives of his brave companions, at



length accepted articles of capitulation, proposed to him by the royal commander.

We regret that we have not a copy of the terms of surrender, because their liberal tenor would shew the high respect entertained by the royalists for Teran. They granted him terms which had been invariably refused to all others of the revolutionary chiefs. We likewise feel satisfaction in stating, that this capitulation was scrupulously and honourably fulfilled, on the part of the royalist commander and the viceroy.

After the patriots had lost Tehuacan, the royalists found themselves in a condition to send a powerful force against Victoria and Osourno.

Don Guadalupe Victoria at no time had under his command more than two thousand men ; but he was so well acquainted with the fastnesses of the province of Vera Cruz, that the royalists never could bring him to a general action. In vain they sent superior forces to attack him ; in vain they drove him from one position to another ; for, as fast as they destroyed part of his forces in one place, he recruited them in another. More than twenty times, the Mexican Gazette has published, that Victoria was slain, and his party annihilated : but, a few days after those false and pompous ac-

counts, we have heard of Victoria suddenly springing up, attacking and capturing convoys of merchandise, seizing some strong holds, and throwing the whole country into consternation. At the head of one hundred and fifty or two hundred cavalry, he performed some of the most daring exploits that were effected during the revolution ; and his personal courage and activity were universally acknowledged, even by his enemies. More than four-fifths of the population of Vera Cruz were in his favour. Wherever he went, provisions were secretly or openly furnished him. Had he possessed musquets, there were from ten to fifteen thousand men ready to accept them, and join his standard. To the want of arms and the munitions of war, and to no other cause, must be attributed his eventual failure. He obtained a few hundred musquets from New Orleans, during the time he possessed the ports of Boquilla de Piedra, and Nautla, on the coast of Vera Cruz ; but, after those places were retaken by the royalists, at the close of 1816, or beginning of 1817, he was cut off from all foreign supplies. The royalists have since proclaimed that he was slain, and his forces destroyed. Whether this be the fact or not, we cannot decide ; but it is certain, that since the

middle of the year 1817, the patriots have not had a formidable party in the province of Vera Cruz.

The forces under Osournó were likewise, about the same time, destroyed or dispersed; and he, as well as his principal officers, we learn, have accepted the royal pardon. Osournó, about the close of the year 1815, was a formidable foe to the royalists, as he had at least two thousand of the finest cavalry in the kingdom, and spread terror even to the gates of Mexico. He and his officers soon became too fond of their personal gratification, indulging in every species of luxury, and directing all their exertions to the acquisition of plunder, and the spreading of devastation. One of his officers, of the name of Vicente Gomez, became celebrated for his cruelty, as well as activity. This monster, under the pretext of retaliation, not only shot his prisoners, but frequently mutilated and tortured them. On one occasion, he boasted of having put to death some European Spaniards, without spilling a drop of their blood, — having caused them to be buried alive. So great was the terror this wretch spread over the country, that the royalists tried every possible means to gain him over to their party. They at length succeeded, by offering

him a rank in the royal service, equal to that which he held among the patriots; and there can be no doubt, that, by his activity and management, he contributed much to accelerate the fall of his former commander, Osourno.

Don Ignacio Rayón, in the province of Valladolid, at the important fort of *Copero*, had resisted, for eighteen months, all attempts of the royalists to dislodge him. He, as well as his two brothers, had acted a conspicuous part; from the commencement of the revolution. He was averse to the sanguinary warfare that had been carried on, and was disgusted at the selfish conduct of the patriot chiefs. Although he was known to be a brave and able officer, warmly attached to the cause he had espoused, yet he frequently declared his resolution to surrender to the royalists, if the patriots persisted in rejecting his advice, and his plans for forming a junction of their forces. He at length did capitulate, and the fort of *Copero* fell into the hands of the royalists.

We cannot, for want of the proper documents, state with precision the dates when these several disasters occurred to the patriots, under the command of Teran, Victoria, Osourno, and Rayón, further than that they took place during the years 1816 and 1817.

Subsequently to those events, the royalists gradually re-conquered many of the revolted districts ; placing garrisons in every town and village, to awe the people into obedience to the royal authority. In this manner, they succeeded in forming a chain of fortifications from north to south, cutting off the communication between the patriots of the eastern and western provinces, who still roamed through the country in formidable bodies, but without co-operation among themselves.

The direction of these revolutionary bodies, thenceforward, fell into the hands of the most illiterate of the Mexican population, men whose sole aim was power, that they might by its aid acquire wealth. Many of these people were, from common field-labourers, raised to the rank of colonels and brigadiers ; their conduct became licentious and cruel in the extreme, and as several of them were daring and enterprising, they were equally dreaded by royalists and patriots.

Men of education, principle, or talent, among the revolutionists, were no longer respected ; any attempts made by them to establish order, were decried as tending to despotism ; while they were insulted, their property was taken from them, under the plea that the public ser-

vice required it; their lives were threatened; and they dared not even murmur against the decrees of their tyrannical oppressors. Thus, on the one side, terrified by the conduct of their own party, and, on the other, allured by the flattering offers of the royalists, they at length sought safety under the banners of Spain, where these sincere patriots now are *friends to liberty*, but *enemies to anarchy*.

The kind of leaders which we have just mentioned, had, nevertheless, extensive districts under their command, in the western provinces; and each petty commandant of a pueblo, imitating the example of his chief, gave loose to his passions, studying only the means of his personal gratification.

They had nominated to the supreme military command a priest, named *Don José Antonio Torres*, who had been raised to the rank of mariscal de campo. In the early stages of his career, he gave some proofs of valour; but he no sooner acquired power, than he displayed the character of a fiend. He was cruel, vindictive, and avaricious, sparing neither patriot nor royalist, to gratify his passions. He levied impositions, in the most arbitrary manner, upon every wealthy individual within the range of his command; and continued to treat every Creole,

from whom there was the slightest probability of meeting opposition to his views, with such indignity, that many of those remaining were reluctantly compelled to fly to the royalists for protection. On the most frivolous pretexts, he had put to death several persons whom he suspected either of being hostile to his conduct, or as likely to become his rivals. Jealousy was the predominant feature in his character; nor did he regard what sacrifices he made, to rid himself of any man from whom he anticipated opposition. Notwithstanding his vicious propensities and base traits, yet he possessed the good quality of sincerely adhering to the cause of the republic. Towards the Spaniards he entertained an unconquerable antipathy. The many overtures that were made to gain him over to the royal party, were treated by him with disdain; and neither offers of rank nor money could induce him to waver in his determination. The following anecdote will more clearly exhibit his enmity to the Gachupins; and demonstrate, that when his patriotism was involved, even the ties of relationship were held of no account.

On one occasion there fell into the hands of the royalists two of his younger brothers. They were compelled to write to him, telling him,

that their lives depended upon his embracing the royal cause ; and that, if he did not do so, they would be shot. To this appeal he returned the following answer :—“ The proposition of the royalists has served only to rouse my indignation. If the enemy do not shoot you, beware how you fall into my hands at any future period. In such event, that death you have escaped from the royalists will be awarded at my hands, for having dared to place your lives in competition with the interest of your country, and insinuating to me terms so dishonourable.”

Torres had under his command an immense extent of country, which had been parcelled out, like the feudal system of old, into districts or *comandancias*. It was a prominent feature of his policy, to select for the government of these districts, men whose gross ignorance, he conceived, would render them subservient to his will, and proper subjects to promote his views of sole dominion. Many of these commandants followed the example set them by Torres, directing their principal attention to personal enjoyments. Without a government capable of enforcing obedience, they were uncontrouled in their proceedings, and acted according to their own pleasure in their respective *comandancias*. The revenues of the state they looked



upon, not as belonging to the public, but as their individual property, and considered, they were conferring an obligation on the republic, when any of its resources were devoted to its service. The forces raised were such only as they thought proper, and were taught to look upon their commandants as masters, whose mandate *alone* they ought to obey. The peasantry were regarded as vassals devoid of every privilege, upon whom they had a right to heap injuries, and the soldiery to prey with impunity. Each commandant became a petty tyrant in his district; the interests of the country were no longer viewed as primary objects, but were supplanted by a devotion to self-gratification; while the chief aim and end of exertion, was to preserve the good-will of the *Sultan* Torres. On his part, he was a proficient in the arts necessary to ingratiate himself into the good opinion of these men. He would gamble and drink with them; would run races, and fight game cocks, in which science Torres was extremely dexterous, till they were stript of their money. In short, as long as the commandants conformed to his instructions, he neither investigated nor cared what was their conduct. It was therefore by no means extraordinary, that Torres, after being appointed commander-in-chief,

maintained an absolute power ; that his orders were implicitly and promptly obeyed. Had they emanated from a man celebrated for correct and upright conduct, more awe and reverence could not have been attached to them. His headquarters were fixed on the top of the mountain of Los Remedios, which he fortified, at the cost, and to the ruin of many families round its base. There, surrounded by women and all the luxuries the country afforded, he became indolent and capricious, issuing the most arbitrary decrees, and like a demi-god, from his lofty seat, smiled at the effects of his imperious mandates upon the faithful Americans by whom he was upheld. When in the zenith of his glory, he was to be seen surrounded by sycophants and women, singing the most fulsome songs in his praise, while, extended on a couch, and fanned by one of his females, he would listen with rapture to the grossest adulation, and indulge in loud bursts of laughter, arising from his heart-felt satisfaction : swelling and exulting with vain glory, he would often exclaim, "*Yo soy xefe de todo el mundo,*"—(*I command the world.*) Such was the character of the leader of the revolutionists in the western provinces. It may be asked, how could such a man be allowed to exercise a power so arbitrary ? why did not the

citizens hurl him from his seat on Los Remedios Bayonets, and the infatuation of the peasantry, were his protection. Whilst he preserved the good-will of the commandants, he had nothing to fear from a disarmed people, whose veneration for him as a priest covered all his crimes. The fear he had instilled into his dependents, was likewise another powerful auxiliary in the maintenance of his authority; for every one on whom his suspicion rested, was either secretly or openly put to death.

To pourtray, in all its hideous forms, the system of despotism and terror, which marked the annals of the power of Torres, is a task neither congenial to the feelings, nor easy to perform. One or two instances will be sufficient out of the number which could be adduced; to demonstrate his baseness. From his inactivity, the enemy were daily gaining ground, and were permitted, unmolested, to fortify themselves in almost every town and village in the Baxio. There however remained El Valle de Santiago, Penjamo, and Puruandiro, three flourishing, wealthy, beautiful, and populous places, within a few leagues of each other. In order to check the progress of the royalists, he fancied that the most effectual and least dangerous method, would be to raze these towns to the ground. For-

getting, or not reflecting, that every other place but those three, being held by the enemy, the sacrifice of them could produce no possible benefit; and, without considering for a moment, that the faithful Americans would suffer, without the possibility of any good resulting therefrom to the cause, he sent orders for the inhabitants to remove their effects in six hours, after which, *each proprietor* was to destroy his own mansion, be it ever so costly or elegant. In every instance it was obeyed, though in some its execution was attended with aggravating circumstances. The inhabitants of Puruandiro petitioned for an extension of time, to enable them to remove their property. This petition was refused, and, before the expiration of three hours, Torres despatched his soldiers, who, running up and down the streets with lighted torches, fired every building, with the exception of the churches. In Puruandiro, as well as other places, families who were in easy, and many in affluent circumstances, were obliged to retire to little farms, and there live in indigence and misery. The towns of San Felipe, Uruapa, and others, were treated in the same manner; and as a proof how futile as well as cruel were such measures, the enemy have since, and do at this moment, occupy every one of those places.

The next circumstance we select, displays all the cruelty and savage ferocity of a barbarian. The people of the Baxio are noted as being more attached to the revolution, than any other part of the Mexican empire. Aversion to, as well as fear of the royalists, impelled the male inhabitants, who could do so, to abandon their houses, and fly to the mountains, whenever they made their appearance. Padre Torres directed his march with some troops to an ill-fated hacienda, called Guanimaro, not far from Penjamo. The people, perceiving the approach of soldiery, fled to a hill close by the hacienda. On entering, the Padre broke forth into a torrent of abuse, because they had run away from him, for so he misconstrued their good intentions. He ordered them to return ; formed them in the environs of the hacienda, and decimated them on the spot. The victims of his wanton barbarity were immediately confessed, and, unmoved by their entreaties or solemn adjurations that it was dread and horror alone for the enemy that caused them to flee, turning a deaf ear to the supplications of their wives, children, and relatives, he ordered them to be shot, in the presence of their friends and kindred.

We have been thus particular in drawing the character of Padre Torres, because in the se-

quel it will be seen, that the conduct of this man towards the brave Mina was the sole cause, notwithstanding all the obstacles he had to contend against, that he did not succeed in his enterprise.

The soldiery over whom the sway of Torres and his satellites extended, were hardy and courageous. Their numbers were at least seven thousand; and, though not all armed with musquets, yet they were expert lancers and excellent horsemen. They were, however, entirely destitute of discipline, were under no command, miserably paid and clothed, without union, each man living at his own home, and scattered over the comandancia. They were the servants of their masters the commandants, and had been so long brought up to irregularity, that they could desert and fly from a field of action with impunity. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that they were no longer able to cope with their antagonists, whose only superiority consisted in remaining united on the field. In point of personal courage and the quality of their horses, the royalists were far inferior; nor had they any good cavalry, until it was formed from the insurgents themselves. When disciplined and taught to fight with order, the patriots invariably defeated their antagonists.

It must be recollected, notwithstanding this unfavourable picture of the patriot chiefs generally, that some few, although their conduct had its faults, were actuated by love of country : innate depravity had not, as with the majority, an influence over their actions.

The peasantry gave the most unequivocal proofs of attachment to the patriot cause ; for, ill-treated, abused, and sacrificed, as they were by the patriots, as well as by the royalists, they continued faithful to the republican standard.

Torres, in order to exhibit the appearance of having a civil government, instituted one after the model of the late Congress. It was composed of a president, *Don Ignacio Ayala*, two members, *Don Mariano Tercera*, and *Dr. Don José San Martín*, and a secretary of war, *Don Francisco Loxero*. They were, however, the mere creatures of Torres, acting in conformity to his wishes, and in fact, instead of controlling his operations, they strengthened his power over the people. Although the government issued decrees, yet they were obeyed or disregarded, as suited the caprice or interest of Torres and the commandants, who attended solely to his mandates.

The new Congress bestowed on Torres the rank of lieutenant-general, and commander-in-chief of all the forces of the Mexican

republic. The royalists, at that time, had garrisoned all the principal towns; but the patriots still had control over the country, even to the very walls. They were scattered in guerilla parties, principally cavalry, consisting of from fifty to a thousand men; and their excursions extended from the *Sierra Gorda*, to the shores of the Pacific ocean. In reality, they were little better than bodies of banditti. When they knew of the approach of a division of the royalists, they fled to impregnable stations in the mountains, and there waited until the enemy retired; then, descending to the plains, they renewed the same scenes of drunkenness, gambling, and crimes of every description.

The royalists were not idle spectators of these disorders, nor of the distracted condition of the patriots, but daily improved the advantages they offered.

Such was the state of the Mexican revolution, when Mina arrived at the fort of Sombrero. The disasters we have related, were then only partially communicated to him; and he still fondly indulged the hope, that it was practicable to remedy the evils which the revolutionists had suffered. He flattered himself, that the gallant officers he had brought with him, as well as the soldiers of his little band,



would, by their influence and example, infuse new ardour into the patriots, promote their union, and enable him to strike a decisive blow against the royalists.

The patriots still retained possession of three forts; those of *Sombrero*; *Los Remedios*, about sixty miles off; and *Jaurilla*, at an equal distance from Remedios, where the Congress held their sittings.

There likewise remained among the patriots a few men of distinguished character, who, notwithstanding they had become disgusted with the outrageous conduct of the revolutionists, yet entertained so implacable a hatred to the Spaniards, that they preferred seeking an abode in the forest, to accepting the royal pardon. Among these men was *Don José Maria Liceaga*, the president of the Congress at Apatzingan, who signed the constitution. But none of these worthy men now retained any command or influence: education, talent, and pure patriotism, were proscribed, under such men as Torres and his party.

Among the military commandants who then acted under Torres, there were few capable of reading or writing. They usually employed a secretary, on whom devolved the duty of reading and answering despatches. When an im-

portant paper was to be signed, the commandant impressed it with a seal, bearing his name, and ornamented with some rude insignia.

It was with men of this character that the unfortunate Mina was destined to co-operate. He beheld around him nothing but gross ignorance and anarchy, which threatened to render all his efforts ineffectual. Disappointed and mortified, he yet concealed his chagrin, except to a few of his confidential officers. He had anticipated a different scene; and, although he never had calculated on finding the revolutionary forces under military discipline, or with skilful officers, yet he had pourtrayed them in his mind as enthusiasts in the cause of liberty, and had always understood that they were a brave and hardy race of people. During his recent march from the coast to Sombrero, he had received the most positive proofs of the innate courage of the Creoles; and was, therefore, still flattered with the hope that it would be in his power to succeed in emancipating Mexico. He considered his junction with the patriots, even under all the disadvantages in which he found them placed, as the first great step to his future glory and success; and, however extravagant such calculations may at present appear, it is evident to the mind of

the author, that if Torres, and the rest of the patriot chiefs under his orders, had sacrificed their private views to their country's cause, and magnanimously and cordially co-operated with Mina, appointing him commander-in-chief; he would have found a superabundance of men and resources, not only to have checked the progress of the royalists, but to have given to the revolution a brighter aspect than it had borne at any previous time, since the commencement of the struggle.

It is well known to the writer, that, at the period we are speaking of, nearly every regiment of European and Creole troops, in the city of Mexico, and in the middle provinces, was suspected of disaffection, and of a disposition to revolt. Could Mina have maintained his position for a few months after he had effected his junction with the patriots, there is every moral probability that a general defection would have occurred. Murmurings and desertions were becoming so common among the Spanish troops, particularly in the regiment of Zaragoza, that the government was in the greatest state of alarm. Its existence actually depended on arresting the progress of Mina towards the middle provinces; and thus, on the co-operation of Torres and his party with Mina,

depended the fate of the royal government in Mexico.

It will likewise be obvious to the reader, how different would have been Mina's situation, had he arrived twelve, or even nine months earlier on the Mexican coast, and formed a junction with such commanders as Victoria and Teran, instead of the jealous and depraved Torres. Then, indeed, would the hero of Navarre have gained new laurels, and the cause of liberty have been triumphant. But let us pursue the train of events, in the order they occurred, subsequent to the arrival of Mina at fort Sombrero.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Action of San Juan de los Llanos—Capture of the Jaral—Interview at Sombrero, between General Mina and some of the Revolutionary Chiefs—Overture by Mina for an exchange of prisoners—Events at Sombrero.*

THE officers and soldiers of Mina's little army, on entering fort Sombrero, looked forward to enjoying a few days of repose; but the enterprising general could not remain inactive, while any occasion offered to annoy his enemy. On the 28th, information was received that a movement was made in the direction of the fort, by a body of seven hundred of the enemy, under the command of *Colonel Don Felipe Castañon*, and that he was in the town of San Felipe, distant from Sombrero, east-north-east, about thirteen leagues.

Castañon, from his activity in surprising parties of the patriots, and the enormities he committed, had rendered himself conspicuous. His fidelity had been rewarded by his govern-

ment with the command of this division, and they granted him, as a peculiar mark of confidence, liberty to act as his discretion dictated. He was allowed to move in any direction, and to enter into any province he chose, with his force, which was styled a flying division : it consisted of three hundred excellent cavalry, and four hundred infantry. His movements were rapid and secret ; and being generally made under cover of the night, he kept the whole country in the Baxio in perpetual alarm. He had been invariably victorious, and his name excited such terror, that the patriots, at length, could not be brought to face him ; each individual, whether peasant or soldier, when his name was mentioned, and he was supposed to be near, thought only of making an escape.

It had latterly been the practice with the royalist commanders, in virtue of orders from the viceroy Apodaca, not to put to death, or molest the persons of country people within the jurisdiction of the patriots, unless they were actually taken in arms. This order was in general attended to, except in some occasional instances of plunder ; but Castañon most wantonly disobeyed it, with regard to every individual, that came within his merciless grasp. The Gazette of Mexico teemed with his des-

patches, in which, after enumerating his savage acts, he invariably wound up by informing the viceroy, that the prisoners should be shot. The aged and infirm, women and children, were alike the victims of his sanguinary and vindictive spirit, so that as he advanced, every one fled to the mountains, or retired to secret retreats in the ravines, to avoid his fury. Meeting with no opposition, in the most merciless manner he murdered and robbed the unhappy peasantry, wherever they were found, and desolated every place through which he passed.

Mina, on the intelligence of his approach, rejoiced in the opportunity of checking the strides of this ferocious royalist, and, accordingly, on the evening of the 28th, marched to meet him with the effective force of the division, about two hundred strong, accompanied by Don Pedro Moreno, with a detachment of fifty infantry and eighty lancers, under *Don Encarnacion Ortiz*. The division continued its march till midnight, when, on reaching the ruins of an hacienda, they were joined by some patriot infantry, which increased the party to nearly four hundred men. At three in the morning, the division halted, about six leagues from San Felipe. Morning presented to view

the comrades who had joined during the march. They were a motley group, that merely swelled the numerical force, without bringing an addition of strength. Over their shoulders was thrown a tattered blanket, which, with a pair of drawers, constituted their only clothing. Their muskets were generally rusty, without bayonets, the locks out of repair, and many without flints. The men were unaccustomed to even the semblance of discipline, for they had lived at their own houses, scattered over several leagues of country, and had been suddenly called together for the present expedition. Such was the allied infantry; but it must not be inferred, that the lancers under Ortiz were of a similar description.

The patriots invariably pay great attention to, and take great pride in their cavalry. The lancers of Ortiz were mounted on fine horses; each man carrying either a lance or carabine, with pistols or a sword; and although they had no uniform, and were clothed in the same grotesque manner we have described on a former occasion, yet they were a hardy, fine-looking set of men, full of animation and courage. Woe be to the broken ranks of an enemy, when pierced by such men as composed the cavalry of Ortiz.



At seven o'clock next morning the troops were in motion. After advancing about a league, the enemy were discovered approaching by the same road, which lay through a beautiful undulating plain, on the lands of the hacienda of *San Juan de los Llanos*, distant from the town of San Felipe five leagues. The scene of action was near the ruins of that hacienda.

Mina ordered the division to retire behind a rising ground, and there made his dispositions with his usual promptitude and skill. The Guard of Honour, the regiment of the Union, and the infantry of Sombrero, forming a column of ninety men, of whom forty-five were citizens of the United States, were placed under the command of Colonel Young. The first regiment of the line and the patriot infantry formed another column of one hundred and ten men, under Colonel Marques, commander of the former regiment. The cavalry of the division, ninety strong, were commanded by Major Maylefer; the lancers were headed by Don Encarnacion Ortiz; and to these may be added the armed servants.

The enemy having taken up his position, Mina advanced alone to within musquet-shot of their line to reconnoitre. His dress, and the fine appearance of his horse, soon attracted the

notice of the enemy's infantry, who made a general discharge at him, but fortunately without effect. Mina's division were highly delighted with this display of his intrepidity, although many of his officers regretted to see him thus expose his person.

Having, however, accomplished his object, he returned to his troops, and gave orders for them to advance briskly to the attack. Colonel Young, at the head of his column, moved up rapidly under a heavy fire of grape and musquetry, poured into their infantry one volley, and then gallantly made a charge with the bayonet. Major Maylefer, at the head of his cavalry, at the same moment, falling, sword in hand, on that of the enemy, the whole gave way. The lancers, the instant they perceived the royalists in disorder, dashed furiously among them; the rout became general, and the victory was complete.

*Three hundred and thirty-nine* were found slain on the field, and *two hundred and twenty* were taken prisoners. About *one hundred and fifty* of the best mounted cavalry made their escape.

Among the slain was a Colonel Ordoñez, and several other distinguished officers. The implacable enemy of the patriots, Castañon,

received a mortal wound, of which he expired, after riding about five leagues from the scene of action. The cavalry pursued the enemy about two leagues, increasing their loss.

The gallantry displayed by Colonel Young, in this action, and the ardour of his troops, set an example which was followed by all the rest of the division; and in fact, not more than eight minutes elapsed from the time Mina gave the order to advance, till the enemy were in full retreat. Mina's loss was *eight killed*, and *nine wounded*; but among the former was the brave and able officer Major Maylefer. The loss of this man almost counterbalanced the victory. The major was a Swiss, and had been an officer of dragoons in the French army; he had served in Spain, and, exclusive of his military talents, was respected by the troops for his indefatigable attention to his duties.

There fell into Mina's hands, the result of this action, *one brass field-piece* and *a mountain gun*, *five hundred musquets* (the greater part of which were of *British fabric*), a large quantity of *accoutrements*, and *all the ammunition and baggage*.

It is worthy of remark, that the enemy, during this action, fired *dollars* from their artillery. We presume this arose from their want

of grape-shot, for most certainly the state of the government revenue could not well afford such an extravagant mode of warfare. Be this as it may, many of Mina's soldiers were highly pleased with collecting this new species of grape-shot.

Mina returned to his encampment of the preceding night, amidst the congratulations of his soldiers; he marched the next morning, and arrived at Sombrero the same evening. A discharge of artillery announced to the royalists of the Villa de Leon, that a heavy disaster had befallen their cause.

From the republican press of Jauxilla, the news was spread over the plains of the Baxio, and the country held by the patriots. The death of Castañon excited universal joy amongst all classes of people: every demonstration was given of the warm feelings of the inhabitants in favour of the patriotic cause. The royalists had the mortification to see illuminations, and hear the discharge of cannon in every direction around them, up to their very walls. The churches resounded with *Te Deum*. From town to town, the praises of Mina were echoed. The blessings of heaven were implored upon his head, by the widows and orphans of the victims of Castañon. Old and young, from

Sombrero to the environs of the city of Mexico, and from San Luis Potosi to Zacatula, were chaunting hymns in honour of their deliverer.

The royalists now began to have stronger grounds of uneasiness; they beheld Mina's popularity daily augmenting, and they saw their finest troops cut up in detail, by inferior numbers. They knew that the inhabitants of the country were ready to welcome him with open arms, in case he should advance towards Mexico with any respectable force, capable of giving efficient personal protection. They were aware that Mina's victories would increase the spirit of disaffection, which had already begun to manifest itself in the royal ranks, and that every battle he gained, tended to weaken the tie which had hitherto existed between the royalists and the government.

This was the critical moment, when it may be truly said, the destinies of the Mexican nation were in the hands of Mina. Had *Padre Torres* and the other revolutionary chiefs, actuated by a genuine love of country, and devoted to its interests and independence, magnanimously come forward, and placed under Mina's direction the men and resources which they then had at their disposal, the standard of the revolution would now have waved over the walls

of Mexico, and its freedom would have been established. But so far were Torres and his satellites from adopting this important and necessary step, that they began to thwart all his measures, and eventually rendered all his exertions abortive.

After a few days' rest at Sombrero, the general, accompanied by Don Pedro Moreno, marched with the division and a body of lancers, in all three hundred strong, for the purpose of reducing the highly important *hacienda del Jaral*, twenty leagues north from Guanajuato. As this is one of the most extensive and valuable haciendas in the kingdom of Mexico, it may not be uninteresting to give some account of it.

The owner of this famous habitation is a Creole, named *Don Juan de Moncada*. From the hacienda he takes the title of Marques. Previous to the revolution, he was considered among the richest of the landed proprietaries of Mexico, and in the year 1810 actually had at one time in his own mansion six millions of dollars. The rent he derived from his estates, the revenues he drew from cattle, and horses, which latter are the finest in the kingdom, and from his own culture of wheat, Indian corn, and the article of *chile* (capsicum), were immense. He received

from the cultivation of chile alone, more than twenty-five thousand dollars annually. The great quantities of this pungent vegetable, which is grown in almost every part of Mexico, strike a stranger with astonishment. In the districts where the soil is best adapted to its culture, we behold enormous collections of it in all the magazines. For all culinary purposes, this vegetable is as essential to the Mexican, as salt is to the European, and indeed more so, because a Mexican would rather go without bread, than lack chile with his meat. At the table of the rich and poor, it constitutes an article of luxury as well as necessity: both in its green and dried state, the quantity consumed is incredible. When mashed, and mixed with a little water, it is the universal sauce or seasoning on the tables of the great; whilst with the poor, it forms a component part of their diet. More than *one-third* of the Mexican population live throughout the year chiefly on *tortillas* and chile; which last is spread on their tortillas, as butter is with us, though much thicker. On days of festivity, these poor people have occasionally a change of diet, by the addition of a few eggs, or a little broth (*caldo*), but they never relinquish the use of their favourite chile. A stranger, in passing through the country, has

great difficulty, for the first few months, to bear with the food prepared with chile; but, after, his palate becomes accustomed to its stimulus, it ceases to excoriate, and he generally gets as fond of it as the Indians and Creoles.

On the vast estates of the marques of Jaral, extending over *upwards of two hundred miles in length*, the miserable labourers exist, as is customary throughout Mexico, almost entirely on tortillas and chile. No part of the earth exhibits such striking, and such monstrous contrasts of wealth and misery, as well in the country as in the cities, as Mexico. We behold the proprietor of a hacienda, decked in a style of the most costly, but awkward grandeur. He has on a pair of country-made boots, which cost from fifty to a hundred dollars; large spurs inlaid with gold and silver; a superb horse, with a bridle and saddle which cost from a hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars; a cloak or mangas richly embroidered, and full of gold or silver buttons, laces, and fringe. He lives in a spacious house, within whose walls every luxury is to be found that the country affords; but when he sallies forth, he is lost amidst a group of half-naked, badly fed wretches, whose only dress is sheep-skins if in the country, or if in a town their shoulders are covered by an old



blanket or a sheet, serving them for a partial covering by day, and a bed at night. No species of attention is ever paid by the lord of the soil to the comfort or wants of his tenants or vassals, and a more wretched race of cultivators does not exist under the canopy of heaven, than the Indian labourers on these estates, and in the mining districts. Twenty-five cents, or two reals, are the daily wages of a labourer; out of which pittance he has to clothe and feed himself and family, and to pay the government and parochial extortions. No wonder, therefore, that he rarely tastes of animal food. In fact, the situation of a Georgia field negro is superior, notwithstanding all the royal writers say to the contrary.

In the cities, the poorer classes are still more wretched and numerous than in the country. In some places, they are called *Guachinangos*; in others, *Zaragates*, *Leperos*, and *Pelados*. In the city of Mexico, that class of miserable beings is computed at *thirty thousand*, or about *one-fourth* of the population. Some of them display great ingenuity, and evince what might be made of them, if placed under other circumstances. They work beautifully in wax, gold and silver ornaments, in painting and sculpture, and in making boxes of beads: but they know not the

value of their labours. We have seen them, when impelled by hunger, or anxious to obtain a little money to spend on days of festivity, part with articles of exquisite workmanship, on which they had expended weeks of labour, for a few reals.

The majority of these wretches live in idleness, and support themselves by gaming, which, of course, brings in its train all the other vices. Nothing can more forcibly depict, not merely a defective police, but the dreadful features of the Spanish government, than the existence of so much misery in a country blest with the finest soil and climate on earth, and where the actual population is not *one-thousandth part* of what might be subsisted from the physical resources of this beautiful section of the American continent.

The magnificent edifices of the city of Mexico, the personal splendour which surrounds the viceroy and all the officers of government, the costly temples for divine worship, the gorgeous exhibitions in religious processions, contrasted with the gloomy visages and wretched appearance of the Mexican poor, mark the reign of extortion, self-aggrandizement, superstition, and ignorance.—But let us return to the marques of Jaral. He had acted a conspicuous part in the

revolution, by a determined opposition to the patriots, and by his generous gifts to the king: he had raised the regiment of dragoons which bears his name, and of which he was appointed colonel. The demands of his own party, and the occasional incursions of the patriots, had seriously diminished his revenue, but he still possessed several millions, and was supposed to have a large amount of specie, buried in various places. This practice of burying money had become frequent since the revolution, as well among the patriots as royalists, many of them not disclosing the secret until at the point of death. Large sums remain yet thus interred, the owners of which have been unexpectedly cut off by the contending parties, and rather than disclose where it was hid, have allowed it to be lost to circulation. Afraid to bury too much money about their edifices, they have generally conveyed their treasures to unfrequented parts of the mountains, so that it rarely happens that they again come to light; instances, however, have occurred of its recovery, which is not inaptly styled by the Americans "*a resurrection.*"

The hacienda of Jaral, as we have before stated, was of great extent: on it was a large mansion house, several valuable and handsome

buildings, and indeed every necessary accommodation of dwelling houses, stores, &c. &c. There were likewise extensive granaries, a neat church, and some comfortable edifices belonging to the marques's principal dependents, besides a great number of peasants' houses.

The Jaral, like all important haciendas belonging to the royalists, was fortified and garrisoned at the expense of the proprietor. It was walled in and surrounded by a ditch. As the patriots in its vicinity had for some time past been diminishing in number and enterprise, no danger of an attack was apprehended, particularly from Mina, whose distance the marques considered in itself a sufficient protection, presuming it would be impossible for him to approach the hacienda through the dependents, which surrounded it for several miles, without his receiving timely information. Under these impressions, the marques and his family were living there, as he supposed, in perfect security. The soldiery who had escaped the disaster of San Juan de los Llanos, were then quartered in the place, and, with its garrison, the military force of the Jaral amounted to upwards of three hundred men, with three pieces of artillery.

In Mina's enterprise against this hacienda, he exhibited his peculiar talent for guerilla

expeditions. Although the road lay through the thickly settled domains of the marques, for two or three hours of the second day's march from the fort, yet such was the good management and judgment of Mina, that his advance arrived within sight of the hacienda, before the marques was advised of his approach ; and if Colonel Noboa, who commanded the advance, had strictly obeyed Mina's orders, the marques and the garrison would have been taken. They, however, had just time to save themselves by a precipitate flight. The remains of Castañon's division felt no inclination to measure their strength again with Mina, concluding it safest to accompany the marques, with whom they fled to San Luis Potosi. It was dark when the division entered the hacienda. Mina, who was ignorant of the flight of the enemy, was surprised at meeting no resistance, and conceived it probable that the enemy were in ambuscade. Arriving, however, at the mansion, he was met by the priest at the porch, welcoming his arrival at the Jaral, and informing him of the sudden flight of the marques, presenting, at the same time, the respectful compliments of the latter, with a request that the general would consider the hacienda, and all it contained, at his service ; but

that the marqués hoped the general would spare the buildings.

Mina immediately issued orders to his troops to respect private property, and to refrain from ill-treating the inhabitants. The latter were, likewise, made acquainted with these orders, and were requested, in case of any violation of them, to give information at head-quarters, that the perpetrators might receive their merited punishment.

Early next morning, an inquiry was made to ascertain where the treasures were buried. One of the marqués's servants gave information, that a quantity of specie was concealed under the pavement of a small room adjoining the kitchen. After digging a considerable depth, a shovel of earth, mixed with loose dollars, was thrown up. The excavation was continued for about three hours, during which time the general distributed some dollars among the troops, who, on hearing the news, had flocked to the premises to witness so novel a sight.

In the room where the excavation was going on, Don Pedro Moreno, Don Encarnacion Ortiz, three of Mina's staff, and the labourers, were the only persons admitted; sentinels being placed at the door to prevent the entrance

of others. After the operation was ended, an estimate was made, by the treasurer, of the amount taken, at *one hundred and forty thousand dollars*. It was said that Don Pedro, and other of the chiefs, had privately pocketed some *doublons*, which it is highly probable might have been the fact; these were, of course, not included in the estimate.

At an angle of the marques's mansion was a store-house, stocked with articles for the use of the hacienda. In the front it contained dry goods, of British and native manufacture; and in the rear was a magazine of sugar, cocoa, brandies, and other articles. As the manufactured goods were essentially necessary for the troops, they were distributed; but so small was the quantity, that the share, to those who obtained any, was trifling, and many did not receive any thing. The brandies were particularly withheld, and not an article in the magazine was moved from its place. The manufacture, the specie, and a few horses and oxen, were all that were taken. The money was put into waggons; and the same evening the division took up the line of march on its return.

During the day, a deserter came in from San Luis Potosi, and reported, that the marques,

on his arrival there, not considering himself in safety, had passed through the city; and that the inhabitants were anxiously waiting for the arrival of Mina, ready to receive him with open arms. We cannot entirely vouch for the fact; but, from subsequent information, we know, at least, that the people of San Luis were, at that time, ripe for a revolt.

The progress of the division was so slow, owing to the heavy, clumsy nature of the waggons, that the next day a number of asses were procured from San Felipe and its environs; and, after the specie was removed to them, the waggons and the oxen, with the exception of ten, were sent back to the Jaral, accompanied by Mina's best respects to the marques, and an assurance, that at some future day he would do himself the honour again to visit the hacienda.

The next evening, Mina received intelligence that some troops were in a rancho, three leagues distant from the fort, where he had intended to halt that night. The troops in question were supposed to belong to the enemy. A reconnoitring party was despatched to ascertain the fact; but it returned with the information that they were friends. Previous to reaching the rancho, it became very dark and rainy, rendering it difficult to keep the asses in droves;



and, on arriving at the rancho, two or three of the bags of specie were missing. It was afterwards known, that some of the guard, who had charge of this treasure, taking advantage of the obscurity of the night, had appropriated a few thousand dollars to their own use.

At the rancho, the general met Colonel Don Miguel Borja, the commandant of the district of the hacienda de Burras, who informed him that his *Excellency* General Torres, with Doctor Don José San Martín, and other distinguished patriots, were then at Sombrero, where they had come to pay their respects to, and congratulate the general. Mina accordingly set off early next morning, to meet these republican chiefs; and the division, with its prize, entered the fort in the course of the forenoon, under a salute of artillery, whose unwelcome echoes again announced to the vassals of Ferdinand in Leon, some reverse of their arms.

The money was now counted into the military chest, and proved to be one hundred and seven thousand dollars, in place of one hundred and forty thousand, at which it had been previously estimated.

The Spanish government has stated, (no doubt according to the representation of the marques,) that the property of which the Jaral

was robbed, amounted to three hundred and six thousand four hundred dollars, viz.

	Dollars.
In milled money . . . . .	150,000
Provincial money . . . . .	33,300
Bars of silver, and clothes . .	86,000
Goods taken out of the stores .	30,000
In Indian corn . . . . .	5,000
150 oxen, at 14 dollars per head	2,100
	<hr/>
	306,400

It is possible that the marques may have lost property to that amount, but we positively assert that no such value was captured, and that two of the items therein stated are altogether false. If the marques has really made such a statement to his government, he has not only violated the truth, but acted most ungenerously towards Mina. Supposing Don Pedro Moreno, or any other of the patriot chiefs, had entered the Jaral as victors, what would have been the consequences, according to the uniform practice of the patriots and royalists on such occasions? We ask the marques, Would private property have been respected; or the disorders of the soldiers restrained? Would they not have sacked the hacienda, as well as the mansions and the dwellings of the dependents? Would

not the stores and granaries have been emptied; and all the cattle within their reach have been driven off? And, after committing those acts, would they not have closed the scene, by setting fire to the hacienda, and all that could not be carried off? Is it not likewise probable, that even some of the dependents of the marques would have lost their lives?

To the honour of Mina, we once more repeat, that he was averse to all scenes of rapine or cruelty. Mercy marked every step of his progress, and he invariably treated an illiberal enemy with a generosity they little deserved; and never, in any one instance, did he distress or maltreat the victims that fell into his power.

We admit the *possibility* of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars being the amount of the specie; but, as before stated, there was only one hundred and seven thousand received into the chest: the amount distributed among the troops, and what was stolen by the guard, with the doubloons taken by the patriot chiefs, may have amounted to forty-three thousand dollars; but we consider it doubtful.

The item of provincial money in his account is not correct, nor was a single bar of silver taken. We know, from the appearance of the money, that it had been buried since 1810 or

1811; a time when provincial money was unknown. The charge of taking clothes is likewise totally false; the troops having been forbidden to enter the house, could have had no chance to pilfer. The head-quarters were in the mansion of the marques, to which only the staff and superior officers had access. The table was served in plate belonging to the marques, the value of which was very considerable, and yet the whole of it was respected. Is any thing more unlikely then, than that clothes should be taken in preference to plate? The fact is, not an article of the marques's wardrobe was touched, except a richly embroidered pair of country boots, which, with a saddle, were presented to Ortiz. A gold-mounted sword and a chacot were likewise given to another officer.

The whole of the manufactures in the storehouse might possibly be valued at thirty thousand dollars; but the portion distributed among the troops did not amount to a third of that sum.

Neither sugar, cocoa, nor any article in the magazine, was touched, except a small fifteen-gallon cask of tolerably good sherry wine, which was consumed by some of the officers in drinking to the health of the marques, and to the success of the cause of Mexican independence.

The item of five thousand dollars for corn, is another palpable mis-statement. The consumption in two days would not have reached the value of one hundred dollars; and there was not a single fanega taken off. As to the charge for oxen, it is likewise ridiculous; for, as we have before observed, there were only ten taken away.

We conceive it more than probable, that the dependents of the marques, taking advantage of circumstances, may have robbed their master, conceiving that every thing missing in the hacienda would be laid to the incursion of Mina; but we consider it due to the reputation of the general to be thus particular, in repelling the insidious and false attacks on his character, made in the Gazette of Mexico, in relating the affair of the Jaral.

The exaggerations and falsehoods which have been published in that famous Gazette, have constituted one of the main springs in the machinery of the government. With great propriety may they exult in having the absolute control of the press; for to that circumstance, rather than any other, may be attributed the success of the royalists, arising from the ignorance of the patriots, or rather the false statements that were spread among them by the

royalist Gazette, from the commencement of the revolution down to the present day.

The interview at Sombbrero, between the general and the republican chiefs, before named, bore the semblance of sincerity. We have no doubt, with the exception of Padre Torres, every individual among Mina's visitors, was not only sincerely disposed to co-operate with him, but that their professions of attachment to him, and gratitude for the important services he had rendered the cause of independence, really sprung from their hearts.

Mina's victories, his enterprise, his pleasing address, his renown, and fast-spreading popularity, were all calculated to awaken the diabolical passions, which ruled the breast of the envious Torres. He viewed the hero of Navarre as an unwelcome intruder, who would soon destroy the ephemeral authority he then exercised. He saw in Mina an energy of character, and a superiority of talent, that would soon raise him to an exalted rank among the Mexicans, and that he himself should speedily be supplanted in the seat of power. These anticipations, blended with innate depravity, made him view the noble-minded Mina with a rancorous eye, and he no doubt at once secretly resolved to destroy him; indeed, he had scarce-

ly sufficient art or prudence to conceal his malignant jealousy.

The Padre said, that, in consideration of the military talents and fame of Mina, he had no objections to place himself under his orders, but, at the same time, he begged him to remember, that it was an act of condescension, because he (the Padre) was his superior in rank; yet as the interests of the republic required it, he was proud of having an opportunity to shew his devotion to the public good, by acting under so experienced a military chief. The *manner* in which these sentiments were delivered, did not escape the penetration of Colonel Young, who was present, and who had attentively examined the countenance of the Padre during the whole interview.

Mina stated to the leading republican chiefs, his perfect obedience and devotion to their government, and with his characteristic frankness laid open to them his motives for having espoused the cause of American emancipation. He stated his firm resolution to perish or succeed in it; he unfolded all his plans; placed before their eyes their situation; his views of the method to be pursued in the future warfare; and he endeavoured to convince them of the support which would be cheerfully afforded to

the cause by his external friends; he pointed out to them the cardinal value of a warm co-operation, and conjured them, as men and as Mexicans, assertors of their country's liberty, to unite with him in heart and hand against the common enemy of their land. He expressed his firm conviction, that, with proper exertions within, and the support which would, in that case, be rendered from without, the cause of liberty could not fail of success.

Never did the character of Mina appear to higher advantage, than when uttering these pure and patriotic sentiments. The chiefs of the republic, as well as his own officers, who were present, listened to him with admiration, and every heart seemed to respond with gratitude to the hero. Even Padre Torres, at the time, seemed anxious to convince Mina of his cordial and sincere friendship. Taking him by the hand, he exclaimed, "I have six thousand men to place under your orders." "If that is the case," replied the general, "then will I march direct upon the capital of Mexico."

After the interview, when the parties had separated, Colonel Young observed to one of his comrades, "I think we may rely on the sincerity of all the patriot chiefs, except that Padre;



him I do not like ; envy is stamped on his countenance ; we must beware of him ; he will deceive us ; depend upon it, he is inimical to our gallant chief." Alas ! these prophetic hints were too soon verified by the conduct of Torres.

The head-quarters of Torres at Remedios, were in the heart of a country extremely productive of grain of every description. The inhabitants, almost without exception, were devoted to the patriotic cause, and were ever ready and able to furnish any supplies of provisions required by Torres.

The country round the base of Sombrero, had been more or less laid waste, and was thinly cultivated ; and as Mina intended to establish his head-quarters at this fort, until he could raise and equip a considerable body of troops, he was of course obliged to depend on the good management and promises of Torres, to supply him with all the necessary provisions. But in order not to put Torres to any inconvenience, and to obtain supplies with celerity, he handed over to him *eight thousand dollars*, to be appropriated for the immediate victualing of Sombrero, which Torres promised to effect in a few days. It was now resolved among the chiefs, that the most active measures

should be adopted to bring into the field, with every possible despatch, a well-trained army. Torres assured Mina, he might rest perfectly easy that it should soon be accomplished, as he could raise hosts of recruits from the pueblos and ranchos under his command ; and he likewise further stated, that himself and subalterns had a supply of musquets which they had buried.

To the frank and unsuspecting mind of Mina, all this looked well ; he did not even dream that this man could deliberately resolve on deceiving him, and ruining the cause they had both espoused. He flattered himself, that a more intimate acquaintance with each other's views would strengthen their friendship ; and he resolved to do every thing in his power to shew Torres the high confidence he reposed in him. Accordingly, Colonel Noboa was ordered to proceed to Remedios, and there, under the eye, and with the co-operation of Torres, to organize and discipline the troops about to be raised.

After a few days had been spent at Sombrero, in forming the future plan of operations, Torres, with his staff, the governors, &c. accompanied by Colonel Noboa and the eight thousand dollars, returned to Los Remedios.

Mina opened a correspondence with the Spanish commandant of the town of Lagos, for the purpose of effecting the release of Lieutenant Porter, who had (as we have previously stated) been made prisoner, the night before the junction with the patriots. Mina offered to give in exchange for his officer, *any number* of the prisoners he then held. A very polite letter was received from the commandant, (whose name we regret has escaped us,) in which he expressed his grief at the unnatural course of the warfare, and lamented his inability to determine on the exchange without consulting his superior officer, to whom he had immediately transmitted the proposal. A few days afterwards a letter was received, signifying, that the commander-in-chief of the province (we presume Don José de la Cruz) had not only refused to liberate Mina's officer on any conditions, but expressly prohibited the commandant of Lagos from holding any communication whatever with a *rebel*. Thus were Mina's efforts to save his officer rendered abortive, and the Spanish government, rather than deliver up one man, conformably to the usages of civilized warfare and the principles of humanity, preferred risking the sacrifice of *two hundred Spanish prisoners*, then in Mina's hands, and which they had strong reasons to

suppose would be shot. When the Spanish prisoners were informed of the cruel and impolitic answer of the commandant-general, they uttered execrations against him, as well as their barbarous government. If these prisoners had been in the power of Padre Torres, he would without hesitation have shot the whole of them; and those that are now living, must acknowledge that they owe their existence entirely to the generosity of Mina.

We have since understood that Lieutenant Porter was sent to *San Blas*, from whence, we learn that he was deported to a presidio at *Manila*, there to labour on the fortifications, or perhaps to perish in the dungeons of the fortress—the usual fate of those who have the misfortune to be sent to that place.

The conduct of Mina towards his prisoners exhibits traits of policy and humanity, which merit particular notice. Those that were taken in the affair of *San Juan de los Llanos*, had been treated with every possible kindness, and the wounded among them met with the unremitting attentions of the surgeons. This treatment was totally unexpected on the part of the royalist troops, and filled them equally with astonishment and gratitude. The simple act of having removed some of the wounded from

the field of Peotillos, produced most important results among the royalists in favour of Mina, particularly among the European troops; his praise resounded through their ranks, and they now saw, that while opposing Mina, they were not combating for life, as had hitherto been the case; and that if the fortune of war should throw them into his hands, they would be treated as men and as soldiers. We subsequently learned from several deserters, that the royalist troops made Mina frequently the theme of their conversation, and many of them had determined, that when they should again come in contact with his division, they would merely make a shew of fighting, and seize the first occasion to join his standard. The prisoners taken at the affair of San Juan de los Llanos had frequently expressed a desire to join Mina's division. He was now anxious to augment his strength by every possible means, and as the money taken at the Jaral gave him the means of equipment, he addressed the prisoners in an appropriate manner, offering to receive all who would voluntarily enlist under his banners; at the same time generously declaring, that all who did not feel perfectly disposed to do their duty as soldiers of the republic, should be furnished with passports to return to their homes,

and have money to pay their expences. With a burst of joy and gratitude they accepted Mina's offer, and, with the exception of four or five persons, they all agreed to join him, and accordingly were sworn, and enrolled with the first regiment. These were an acquisition of high importance : recruits also were flocking to Sombrero from various parts of the country, so that Mina now saw a prospect of soon raising a fine regiment of infantry, provided the enemy would only continue inactive for a few weeks longer.

Some of the officers of the Guard of Honour were transferred to the first regiment, and Colonel Young received the appointment of inspector-general of the province. The administration of the division was new-modelled and established; a proportion of pay was given to the troops, satisfaction reigned among them, every hour augmented their confidence in their brave chief, and every thing was conducted with order and alacrity. Agents were despatched, with ample funds, to Queretaro, to Mexico, and to many of the manufacturing towns, to purchase cloths, linens, and necessities for the soldiers and officers. In the Villa de Leon, contracts were made with the royalists to supply shoes and hats, and an arsenal was

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erected in the fort. The taylor of the division, and many of the natives, were employed in making uniforms; an armoury, under the direction of an officer of the Guard of Honour, was established; and in fact, such dispositions were made, as denoted not merely the talent and foresight of the general, but the zeal and good conduct of his officers and soldiers.

From the Villa de Leon and the country adjacent, every article of comfort, and even of luxury, was supplied; and as the division was amply provided with money, they soon had a market in the fort, equal, perhaps superior to that of any of the royal towns in the plains.

On the summit of a barren rock, and in the zenith of enjoyment, the troops were indulging in visions of future glory; their past exertions and successes operated as a stimulus to gather fresh laurels, and they looked forward with ardour to the day, when the preparations they were making would enable them to commence their march for the Mexican capital.

The general satisfaction that pervaded Mina's officers and soldiers, was interrupted by the meanness and avarice of Don Pedro Moreno, commandant of the fort. This unprincipled individual bent all his thoughts and actions to the amassing of money.

A great proportion of the prize-money taken at Pinos, was in the provincial coin of Zacatecas; which had been made in that city for circulation, while the communication between the northern and southern provinces was interrupted. The metal was particularly pure; but since the communication had been opened, as the coin was badly stamped, it would only pass in the large cities, where its real value was known. This provincial money afforded a speculation too alluring to escape the attention of the avaricious Don Pedro, whose principal aim, like that of almost every patriot chief under the command of Torres, was to get money, no matter by what means.

He accordingly published a proclamation, declaring that Zacatecas dollars should only be current at four reals (fifty cents.) This affected, in a most tender point, those soldiers who held that kind of prize-money. It was soon discovered that Don Pedro, who had the greatest capital in the fort, purchased them in at the depreciation before mentioned, and sent them to Leon or Lagos, where he received full value for them; thus making fifty per cent out of the soldiers. It was likewise ascertained, that the Don and his officers, taking advantage of their auxiliaries' ignorance of the local customs and



language, monopolized in the market many essential articles, and resold them to the troops at double what they had cost.

This disgraceful business was communicated to Mina; but as he did not wish to interfere with the regulations of the fort, of which Moreno was the commandant, and did not think it a proper time to enter into a dispute with the latter, he appeared to take little notice of the transaction.

It will no doubt appear strange to the reader, that the patriots could procure from the royal towns supplies with such facility, but it is explained as follows.

The royalists, as well as the patriots, were alive to self-interest; the former knew, that unless they kept open a traffic with the latter, the inhabitants of the towns would be exposed to perish by famine. The patriots held under control the peasantry and their productions; they constantly hovered round the towns; scoured, in small parties, every foot-path and by-road, and were continually on the alert. The enemy could only sally out in strong divisions; they were afraid to separate in pursuit of the insurgents; while the latter, on the approach of a division, retired from the high roads a short distance, and as soon as the

royalists were out of sight, or returned within the walls of the towns, again came down to their work of annoyance. By following this species of warfare, they prevented any thing from entering a royalist town, except by a passport. The patriot and royalist commanders found it their interest to grant these passports. The latter, by these means, received provisions; the former, luxuries. A reciprocal traffic was thus established, each party charging heavy duties either on what went into, or on what came out of the towns. Far greater advantages, however, accrued to the royalists by this commerce, than to the opposite party. The royalists, by receiving provisions, were enabled to maintain their positions, which was the primary point. Their commerce prospered; it augmented, though in a small ratio, the revenue. They drew from the patriots their specie; and in short, it tended to demoralize the patriots, and materially to accelerate their subjugation. The patriots, on the other hand, received some manufactures and luxuries, which were by no means essential; and the revenue derived from this impolitic traffic, in the latter stages of the revolution, instead of being applied to the good of their country, flowed into the pockets of the commandants and their satellites.

Frequently the patriots had it in their power literally to starve out the royalists. Some patriotic commanders occasionally determined on this plan, but their efforts were unavailing, for want of union among the other commanders; for, while one was prohibiting provisions from entering a royal town, another was granting passports for their entrance into some other place.

The city of Valladolid was at one time, during the revolution, reduced to the last extremity, the patriots having prohibited all supplies from going into the city. Even the article of charcoal had become so scarce, that females of fortune used to ride in their coaches to the environs of Valladolid, for the purpose of meeting such daring fellows as had the good fortune to escape the vigilance of the patriots, and to bring in a few bushels of it. Disputes would arise about the distribution of the article; and when a person obtained half a bushel, by entreaty or purchase, it was considered a great piece of good fortune. The republican commander of the district at last, however, wanted money, and obtained it by granting licences. The city was thus supplied with provisions, and relieved from distress.

In latter days, this kind of trade between the

contending parties became so general and systematic, that there was scarcely a royal or patriot chief, who did not amass more or less wealth from these licences. This is the only mild trait that has been discernible in the course of the revolution ; but as it springs from the detestable principle of avarice, it must not be considered as a social intercourse ; for the very same people, who thus reciprocally trafficked, were at the same time shooting their respective prisoners in cold blood, and committing towards each other the most savage cruelties.

General Teran, whom we have before noticed for his extraordinary talents, had, in the year 1816, proposed a plan to Victoria and Osorno, for getting possession of the city of Vera Cruz, by marching with their joint forces, and taking up such positions as would have effectually intercepted all its supplies. He knew that such was the improvidence of the Spanish government, that they had no stores of provisions in reserve in that city, and that a vast population depended for its daily subsistence on an intercourse with the country ; of course, if the latter had been suddenly cut off, the surrender of the city was inevitable, because they could not have obtained external succours by water, in time to remedy the evil,

We have been informed, by intelligent royalists of that city—and from our personal knowledge of its dependent condition on the score of provisions; we know it to be a fact—that if Terán's plans had been pursued, the place would have surrendered in fifteen or twenty days, more especially as at that time the great body of the inhabitants (European Spaniards and officers of government excepted) were ripe for a revolt, the moment that a respectable division of the patriots should approach. The jealousies of Victoria and Osourno towards Terán, were the sole cause why the latter did not put his plan into execution. We have been thus particular in stating these facts, because they serve to illustrate our former remark—that the Spanish government owes the existence of its authority at this day in Mexico, entirely to the *ignorance, jealousy, ambition, and venality*, of certain chiefs among the patriots; and that, had their efforts been directed by union and system, the patriots might, at any one period for nearly seven years, have established the liberty of their country.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Intelligence of the fall of Soto la Marina received at Sombrero—Investment of the fort by Arredondo—Operations during the siege—Desertion of La Sala—His base conduct—Gallant defence of the garrison—Its capitulation—The terms—Their violation—Cruel treatment experienced by the captives, in Altamira, on the road to Vera Cruz, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua—Departure of some of the captives for Spain—Order of the minister of war at Madrid—Strictures on the violation of the capitulation, and on the decree of the Cortes, of the 10th of April, 1813—Violation of Miranda's capitulation at Caracas—The consequences thereof—Cruelty of the Spaniards in Puerto Cavello—Dreadful measures of retaliation adopted by General Bolívar.*

WHILE Mina was making his preparations at Sombrero, he received the Gazette of Mexico, in which was announced the fall of the little fort at Soto la Marina. This was, indeed, painful intelligence, not only on account of the loss of some valuable officers, men, arms, and munitions of war; but because it cut him off from an external communication, so essential to the success of his operations.

The official accounts published in the *Gazette*, contained no more information on the subject than what the royalists thought proper to promulgate ; and, as usual, it was composed of hyperbole and falsehood. Authentic information has since been obtained of the circumstances that occurred to that garrison, subsequently to the departure of Mina for the interior.

It was a singular coincidence of events, that on the same day, and nearly at the same hour, when Mina gained the important victory of Peotillos, the garrison of Soto la Marina was forced to capitulate. The gallant defence which it made, reflects the highest honour on its garrison, and shews that the spirit of Mina had extended itself to every individual of his troops.

After Mina's departure, great exertions had been made to discipline the recruits, and to get up the stores from the bar of the river. Among other arrangements, a national guard was formed of the peasantry, and the command given to Major Castillo. The numerical force, under the orders of Major Sardá, was only *one hundred and thirty-five* men.

On the 3rd of June, a foraging party of twenty-five men, under the command of Cap-

tain Andreas, was despatched to bring in a supply of corn. It was returning, on the 8th, with twenty-three mules, laden with provisions, when it encountered a party of *two hundred and twenty* of the enemy. The little band maintained an obstinate action for half an hour, when the whole, except three, were killed or taken prisoners. The latter were all shot, except the commander, Andreas, whose life was spared, on his promise of rendering them services. This loss was severely felt by the commander of the fort, Major Sardá, as it reduced his force to one hundred and thirteen men.

The major had received information, on the 6th, of the approach of the royalists, and immediately ordered every person to work on the entrenchments. The labour, under a scorching sun, was severe and unremitting; but not a murmur was heard from any one. All were intent on preparing to withstand a siege. Even the females of the peasantry took an active part in the toil; they killed and jerked the cattle. The seamen were strenuous in their exertions to remove the stores from the beach. In the mean time, the Spanish naval squadron, recently strengthened by a brig, had twice appeared off the river; but shewed no disposition to risk a landing.



On the 11th, the royalist forces made their first appearance, and occupied the rancho of San José, about a league distant. They consisted of the battalion of Fernando VII. ; an European regiment of infantry, *three hundred and sixty* strong ; *three hundred and fifty* infantry of the regiment of Fixo de Vera Cruz ; *two hundred and eighty* artillerists, with *nineteen* pieces of artillery ; and *twelve hundred* cavalry ; the whole under the command of General Arredondo.

To oppose this formidable force, Major Sardà had only *one hundred and thirteen* men ; ninety-three of whom composed the garrison, the remaining twenty being occupied in attending to the preservation of the stores. Colonel Myers, of the artillery, and Commissary Bianchi, had previously resigned ; and Captain Daganan, a French officer, was appointed to succeed to the command of the artillery. On the fort were mounted three field-pieces, two howitzers, one eleven-and-a-half-inch mortar, and three carronades. The rear of the fort, however, was open, as there had not been time to throw up the intended redoubt. Colonel Perry, whose conduct and fate we have already narrated, had marched, it appears, to the bar, and there supplied himself with arms and am-

munition. Major Sardá indulged a hope that the colonel, after deliberate reflection, would have returned to his comrades; but unfortunately this expectation was disappointed. Had the fifty-three Americans, who abandoned the cause with Perry, returned to the fort, it is highly probable that the enemy would have been successfully resisted. This assertion is supported, not only by the gallantry displayed by the handful of men who defended the fort, but by the want of skill and good conduct on the part of the besiegers.

On the 12th, the enemy, from a distant battery on the opposite bank of the river, opened a fire, which they maintained until the 14th, without doing any material injury.

Captain Andreas, who had been taken prisoner, and whose life had been spared, as before stated, on condition of serving the enemy, accordingly wrote to Captain *La Sala*, the senior officer of engineers, and to Captain *Metternich*, of the first regiment, inviting them to desert the fort, and come over to the royalists; and, on the 13th, these two officers actually passed to the enemy. This occurrence not only excited indignation, but created much uneasiness among the garrison, as *La Sala* was minutely acquainted with the situation of the fort, and

might likewise give every information necessary for its reduction. Major Sardá, therefore, called a council of war; and, after a short consultation, the officers crossed their swords, and swore to defend the fort to the uttermost extremity.

The village of Soto la Marina had been burned, and almost every thing cut down that was thought capable of affording shelter to the enemy; but on the right of the fort had been left a few bushes, under cover of which was stationed a party of three hundred cavalry, who attempted to drive away the cattle that were grazing near the fort. To dislodge these, twenty-six infantry, with one field-piece, sallied from the fort, and in a most gallant manner attacking the enemy, put them to flight. This affair animated the men, inspired them with confidence in their own valour, and filled them with contempt for the enemy.

The garrison continued to work night and day to complete the fortification, maintaining, at the same time, a steady fire, whenever the enemy presented themselves; and, in order not to lose time, a few were employed constantly in loading musquets, while the others fired. A thousand musquets, loaded, and with fixed bayonets, were kept ready, in case of an assault.

On the night of the 14th, by the recommendation of the traitor La Sala, the enemy planted a battery on the right bank of the river, within musquet-shot; and at three, A. M. of the 15th, they opened a tremendous fire, from twelve pieces of artillery, upon the rear of the fort. Soon after day-light, they brought up seven pieces of artillery on the left bank of the river; and thus the garrison was exposed to a cross fire, which spread destruction at every shot.

Mina had taken La Sala, with two other Italians, out of a state of mendicity, in London. The wife and family of one of them were brought to the United States at the expense of the general, who, as far as his means permitted, made provision for their support. This man and a brother were among the deserters at Port au Prince; and, not content with that act of ingratitude, he had the assurance to commence a prosecution for six months' pay. But an order from General Boyer, now president of the republic, prevented the court from proceeding in so iniquitous a case. La Sala was then indignant at the conduct of his two friends, and expressed his determination to follow the fortunes of the General. This apparent fidelity was not lost on Mina. La Sala was promoted

to a captaincy, and he stood high in the esteem of the general ; as a proof of which, he was entrusted with the arduous and honourable post of chief engineer of Soto la Marina. Under such circumstances, his desertion was an act of peculiar baseness ; but his advising the enemy where to plant their cannon, so as most effectually to destroy his former comrades, and, as it appeared, his wantonly directing their fire even upon the place in which he knew the women and children took refuge, are circumstances so monstrous, as to outrage the best feelings of human nature. Had it not been for the treacherous conduct of this faithless Italian, the enemy would undoubtedly have been baffled in their attempts on the fort.

The enemy, as soon as they opened the battery on the right bank, lined the river with the light infantry of the Fernando VII. by which they succeeded in preventing the garrison from reaching the river. At sun-rise it was perfectly calm ; but the heat became most oppressive. These circumstances, combined with the close state of the atmosphere, and the unremitting exertions of the troops, soon rendered their thirst insupportable ; and, although the river was within a few paces, so heavy and destructive was the fire of the enemy, that no man,

even the boldest, would venture to allay his thirst. In this situation, a Mexican heroine, seeing the men fainting at the guns, intrepidly sallied from the fort, and, amid a shower of balls, succeeded, uninjured, in bringing a partial supply of water to the suffering soldiers.

At noon the artillery of the fort was either altogether dismounted, or more or less disabled, and the grape-shot was nearly expended. The enemy had succeeded in making a breach in the face of the work; their bugles, trumpets, and drums, now sounded the advance, and their columns were discovered moving up in close order to the assault. This was the critical moment for the little garrison to display all their energies; and, accordingly, they prepared with firmness to repel the approaching storm, or to die in the attempt. The loaded musquets were kept in readiness; and some of the guns were temporarily remounted, as supposed, for the last time: these were loaded to the muzzles with musquet-balls, the only remaining howitzer containing upwards of nine hundred. The enemy now advanced briskly, vociferating "*Viva el Rey!*" and, presenting a formidable front, seemed determined on carrying the fort. They were suffered to approach within a hundred paces;

when the garrison greeted them with shouts of "*Viva la Libertad y Mina!*" accompanied by a heavy discharge of musquet-balls. The enemy, unable to withstand so vigorous a resistance, fell into confusion, faced about, and fled in the utmost consternation and disorder. They rallied, and again advanced in columns of attack, driving before them droves of horses, for the double purpose of covering the men from the fire of the garrison, and filling up the ditch with those that should be killed. The garrison retained their fire as before; the enemy approached with the same apparent resolution, but were again as effectually received, and repulsed. During this assault, Arredondo narrowly escaped destruction from a cannon ball. Once more the enemy rallied, and made a third attempt, which likewise terminated in a destructive repulse.

In this manner did a mere handful of brave men, attacked in front, rear, and on the flanks, resist an overwhelming superiority of numbers. Heroic as was this defence, yet the garrison was too weak to sustain much longer a contest so unequal and unabating, without repose or refreshment; for incessant labour, and intolerable thirst, had exhausted almost every individual. The artillery was rendered nearly

useless; most of the artillerists were killed; and the infantry, by incessant firing, were so bruised, that they could scarcely bring a musquet to the shoulder. In this deplorable situation, the recruits became alarmed, and some of them escaped from the fort. The firing on both sides, as if by mutual consent, after the third repulse, had somewhat slackened. The slaughter which had been made among the royal troops, taught them the danger of attempting another assault on a place defended by men who had given such proofs of constancy and courage.

At half-past one, a flag of truce was sent by Arredondo, demanding the surrender of the fort at discretion. He was answered that such a proposal was inadmissible; and he was even recommended to make another attempt to carry the place by assault. Major Sardá then called together the remaining recruits, and asked them if they would share the fate of the foreigners, who were determined to die, rather than submit to any dishonourable terms: "We are ready to die with you," was the reply of these high-spirited peasants. Another flag now arrived, with the offer that the lives of the garrison should be spared: the former answer was repeated. A third message was received; and,



while the conference was going on, the staff-adjutant of Arredondo came up, and stated, that his general would sincerely regret to be obliged to sacrifice men who had displayed such extraordinary bravery; and that he was empowered to accede to the most honourable and liberal terms. Accordingly, after some consultation, the following articles of capitulation were drawn up, and handed to the officer:—

I. All parties composing the garrison of the fort of Soto la Marina, as well as those that are or may have been at the bar or on the river, shall be included in the present capitulation. They shall surrender themselves prisoners of war, every one receiving a treatment corresponding with his rank; and the officers shall be paroled.

II. All private property shall be respected.

III. The foreigners shall be sent to the United States, by the first opportunity. The natives of the country shall be sent to their respective homes, and their past conduct shall remain wholly unnoticed.

IV. The garrison shall march out with the honours of war, and stack their arms.

These conditions being agreed on, the Spanish officer, in the presence of the whole garri-

son, declared that he was authorized by General Arredondo to accede to any terms he thought proper; and that therefore he solemnly pledged his word of honour, on behalf of his commanding officer, that the conditions of capitulation, thus placed in his hands, should be scrupulously observed. Major Sardá was well aware, that the honour of a royalist officer, thus solemnly pledged, if he were an honourable person, was a better security than any written document given by a dishonourable one; because, if there exist a disposition to violate engagements, there will never be wanting a pretext to destroy documents; whereas, by appearing to have confidence in their honour, he was most likely to ensure the faithful performance of the capitulation. Under these circumstances, he did not deem it expedient to insist upon a formal written capitulation, with the signature of General Arredondo.

These points being fixed, hostilities ceased; and, the same afternoon, the garrison marched out with all the honours of war. *Thirty-seven men and officers were all that remained of the garrison.* They grounded their arms before fifteen hundred of the enemy. Those who were at the bar, or on the river, also became prisoners. Thus fell *the little mud fort of Soñá*

*la Marina*, after bravely sustaining a spirited attack of eleven hours. If such a defence had been made in Europe, in India, or in any other part of the civilized world, it would have occupied no ordinary rank in the gazettes and military annals of the present age; and at least the commander of the fort and his brave associates would have been respected in their persons, and not have experienced a base and cruel violation of the terms of surrender.

When General Arredondo saw the little band march out of the fort, and ground their arms, he approached their commander, and petulantly asked, "Are these the whole garrison?" Being answered in the affirmative, he abruptly turned round to the commanding officer of the regiment of Ferdinand VII. and exclaimed, "Is it possible?"

The loss of the royalists was three hundred killed, and a proportionate number wounded. The valuable depôt of arms and military stores, which fell into their hands, seemed to console them in some measure for the severe loss they had sustained; and for the first two days, the little band of heroes were at liberty, and every thing indicated good faith on the part of the royalists. Their officers in general offered Major Sardá and his men their congratu-

lations on the happy conclusion of the late affair, and stated that General Arredondo had received a recent proclamation of the viceroy, promising the royal amnesty to all those of Mina's expedition who should abandon it; that they should be furnished with passports to the United States, with money to defray their expenses, and consequently that they might rely on the capitulation being strictly fulfilled. These, however, were short-lived promises; and on the third day the unhappy captives saw the first breach of the capitulation made, by their being placed under guard, and a part being forced to bury the dead, and destroy the works. Shortly after, they saw their comrades of the foraging party, who had been taken on the 3d of June, and who had experienced from their captor, Don Felipe La Garza, a treatment the most humane, led to the front of the camp, and shot. No other reason was assigned for this barbarous act, but that they were not included in the capitulation. One of the prisoners was Lieutenant Hutchinson, a citizen of the United States; his wounds were so severe, that he was unable to sit up; he was shot as he lay in his litter. This tragedy taught the other prisoners to have little confidence in the faith of men capable of such wan-

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ton cruelty ; and it was now generally anticipated, that the capitulation would be wholly set aside.

The venerable prelate Dr. Mier, celebrated for his virtues and his sufferings, was denounced by the rector of Soto la Marina (an European Spaniard), for having performed the sacred ceremonies of the mass with *vino mescal*, (a spirit distilled from one of the species of maguey,) instead of wine. The rector, it will be recollected, received Mina with open arms, and afterwards, on his giving a promise to return, was permitted to leave the village ; but he came back only when the royalists had entered the place. The denunciation in question, however farcical it may appear to the reader, was fatal to the venerated Dr. Mier. In vain would he have stated, that no wine could be procured, and that if he had not substituted *vino mescal*, he could not have performed the duty of celebrating the mass to the garrison. The worthy old man, in whose countenance shone a spirit of meekness and serenity that would have softened savages, became the object of insulting jests and outrage. He was loaded with enormous shackles, and in that deplorable state was sent under an escort to the city of Mexico. We afterwards learned, that, from debility and

ill usage, he had the misfortune on the road, to fracture a limb. Upon his arrival at Mexico, he was delivered to the holy office of the Inquisition, and again incarcerated in his former abode in the dungeons of that horrible instrument of religion, perverted from its sacred and holy design.

The garrison, which had been kept under close arrest for ten days, were then sent as prisoners to Altamira, and there put in confinement. This was such a direct infraction of the capitulation, that the prisoners naturally concluding they should ere long be treacherously sacrificed, had therefore meditated an attempt to escape. Accordingly, a plan was arranged among the greater part of them to rise upon the guard, make their way to Tampico, and there, in case of necessity, embark in the vessels then lying in the port. An enterprise of this kind was not so difficult or desperate as may at the first view be imagined. A small band of intrepid men, indignant at the violation of the capitulation, seeing before them no other prospect but a miserable captivity, and determined to die rather than remain slaves, must, under such circumstances be capable of performing extraordinary deeds; and there is little doubt, that if they had once

overcome the guard, they would have succeeded. But, unfortunately for them, their intentions were either suspected, or discovered by one of their own party ; and, within about an hour of the time when they contemplated striking the blow, they were astonished by the sudden appearance of a detachment of soldiers entering their prison.

The royalist officer, who commanded the party of soldiers, informed the captives that he had orders to put them in irons. Accordingly, they were all heavily ironed, and conducted to different places of confinement in the town. Then commenced a scene of cruelty, which, if it were possible to be described, would find but few readers willing to believe the horrible detail. Few, very few of those captives are now living ; but should any of them cast their eye on this statement of their sufferings, they will readily perceive that the following sketch is but a mere outline of the miseries they endured.

They were conducted to Vera Cruz by the circuitous route of Pachuca, twenty-five leagues from the city of Mexico. Although on horseback, the weight of their irons, the length of the journey, want of wholesome food, and oppressive heat, brought on debility and disease ; but their distress and torments seemed to excite

joy among their Spanish conductors. Some, overcome with their sufferings, fainted on the road, and were fastened to their horses with cords; others became frantic, and begged to be shot or bayoneted; while the remainder were driven along like cattle, to the end of the day's march, and then thrown into wretched hovels, swarming with vermin. A pittance of coarse food, barely sufficient to sustain life, was given them; but so great was their fatigue and bodily pain, that to eat was to add to their sufferings. Extreme debility of course ensued, and as scarcely any rest was allowed, it became almost impossible for any one of them even to bear the weight of his irons. Indeed, had it not been for the humanity of the Mexican population, very few would have survived.

In this dreadful condition they at length reached the city of Vera Cruz, where fourteen of them were incarcerated during a night in a room not capable of containing four men at their ease. They were all so huddled together and closely wedged, that they were obliged to stand upright. No air entered the place; a general suffocation had therefore nearly taken place. An officer, reduced to the last extremity, begged for a little water; the sentinel who was applied to, replied, he had positive orders



to grant nothing; and calmly wished the officer a speedy passage to the other world.

The dungeon in the castle of San Juan de Ulua, on a small island opposite Vera Cruz, in which these victims were afterwards confined; cannot be compared with any other in the world. Situated about fourteen feet under the arches of the castle, a gloomy light can only be admitted by a small grating at the top. There is a constant humidity; and as the bottom of the dungeon is below the level of the sea, water oozes in, and has opened passages through which crabs find access. These were finally welcome visitors to the prisoners, serving them for occasional food. The number of persons confined in so small a space, soon produced a pestilential air, and disease became general among them. The sentinels, on opening the doors, frequently fainted on inhaling the horrid effluvia issuing from the dungeon. The daily allowance of food was four ounces of bread, three of rice, and three of beans. This however was frequently curtailed, and was cooked in so disgusting a manner, without salt, that nothing but extreme hunger could induce some of the prisoners to touch any thing but the bread. In vain they begged that the sick should be separated from those who still retained some remnant of health.

they were all chained indiscriminately in pairs, and on opening the dungeon one morning, two were found dead in their chains.

At length, when an order came to remove the sick, it was only executed in extreme cases, and even then, the victim was removed to the hospital in irons, which were never struck off, till death had put an end to the miserable sufferer. There was one instance of such deliberate and savage cruelty, as to excite the indignation and reprehension of several Spanish officers.

One of the prisoners, a citizen of the United States, had the skin of his leg chafed by the irons. From the want of dressings, and wholesome aliment, the sore rapidly increased. The irritation and pressure of the iron, caused the flesh and muscles to become completely ulcerated to the bone; the whole leg became a mass of putrefaction. Unavailing were his petitions to have the irons taken off; his groans and excruciating agonies at length so far arrested the attention of his keepers, that he was removed to the hospital. The physician, on examining the horrid state of the leg, immediately addressed a representation to the governor, stating, that unless the irons were removed, death would inevitably ensue. Upon *the margin* of the memorial, the governor wrote the following in-

human replication, and sent it to the officer of the guard : "*Que los lleva, mientras respira ;*" *Whilst he breathes, he shall wear them.* This barbarian was the Brigadier Don Juan Evia. In a few hours this victim of Spanish inhumanity expired.

We forbear swelling our pages with the farther recital of these barbarous acts, and conclude by stating, that of the thirty-seven officers and soldiers who capitulated at Soto la Marina, and about thirty others, foreigners of Mina's party, who, before and subsequent to that affair, had fallen into the hands of the royalists, at least thirty died, at Altamira, on the route to Vera Cruz, and in the dungeons of San Juan de Ulua.

The few that survived the horrors of those dungeons were shipped for Spain, to await the farther orders of the king. On their passage to the Peninsula, they were treated with every indignity and cruelty, with the exception of four, who were sent from Havana in the Spanish brig of war *Ligero*, commanded by Captain *Martinez*. This benevolent officer treated them with kindness, had their irons taken off during the passage, and gave them wholesome food.

In order to shew how far the Spanish autho-

rities in Mexico carried their vindictive feelings against every individual connected with Mina's party, we must notice their conduct to a French female, who had accompanied the expedition from Galvezton. The name of this extraordinary woman is *La Mar*. She had formerly resided at Carthage, and had distinguished herself on many occasions, by her intrepidity and her aversion to the Spaniards. At Soto la Marina, her attentions to the sick and wounded were unceasing ; and during the siege she acted with the spirit of an Amazon. On the march to Altamira and Tampico, although exposed to the wanton and scornful jests of the Spaniards, she sustained herself with unshaken fortitude. She constantly displayed a cheerfulness, which, together with her indefatigable exertions to soothe the distresses of the prisoners, proved most consoling to them. She is said to have been afterwards a leading character in the revolt at Altamira. She was sent to Vera Cruz, and there confined in the hospital, where she was compelled to perform the most disgusting offices to the sick. At length she contrived to make her escape, leaving a letter addressed to the governor of Vera Cruz, and another to the viceroy, containing the most bitter reproaches for the violation of the capitulation, and me-

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tracing them with the revenge of the patriots. She reached a division of the troops of Guadalupe Victoria, with whom she remained some time, but was so unfortunate as to fall again into the hands of the royalists. In July, 1819, she was confined within the walls of *Xalapa*, condemned to perform servile duties in a private family. In vain has this woman presented frequent petitions to be permitted to leave the country. The spirit of revenge and the cruelty of the immediate agents of Ferdinand VII. appear to have taken place of their former gallantry to the sex, and they hold her of so much importance, as to determine on keeping her a prisoner.

The fate of the captives who arrived in Spain, was, if possible, more dreadful than their previous sufferings in Mexico. This will be more clearly perceived from the royal order, communicated to the governor of Cadiz, from *Eguia*, the minister of war, of which the following is a translation :—

“ The viceroy of New Spain having communicated to this department his intention of despatching for the Peninsula, to be placed at the disposal of our lord the king, the individuals named in the accompanying list, who, having been attached to the rabble (*gavilla*)

with which the traitor Xavier Mina invaded the territory of that kingdom, took the benefit of the amnesty (*indulto*) which the viceroy had there proclaimed, his majesty has been graciously pleased to command the supreme council of war, to determine what would be the best measures to adopt respecting them, on their arrival at Cadiz, or any other port in the Peninsula; and the said tribunal having declared its opinion, which has been approved of by his majesty, he has been pleased to order, "That the thirty-six individuals comprising the said list, shall, on their arrival in Spain, be distributed by fours, to the presidios of Cadiz, Malaga, Melilla, Peñon, Ceuta, and Alhucemas, and the remaining twelve shall be placed at the disposal of the captain-general of Majorca, in order that they may be distributed in the same proportions through the district under his command. In these places, they are to be retained as *convicts* (*presidarios*), there to remain during the pleasure of his majesty. The said governors are most scrupulously to watch over their conduct, and give timely notice of any thing they may remark, in order that the *greatest rigour* may be enforced against them; keeping constantly in view, that they are responsible for whatever disturbance may be

created by them, in whom not the smallest confidence can be placed, until by indubitable proofs they render themselves worthy of it, and of the clemency of his majesty. This royal decree is sent for your government, that, as far as concerns yourself, you may be prepared to carry it into execution.

(Signed) "EGUIA.

" Madrid, June 11, 1818."

On the arrival of these unfortunate men at Cadiz, the royal order just cited was strictly carried into effect, and they were despatched to Malaga, and the presidios on the coast of Africa. Their treatment was various, and depended on the caprice of the several commandants. To a few, it is true, some kindness was shewn, but the majority were severally loaded with chains, and linked either to galley slaves, or to Spanish or negro malefactors. Some were thrown into dungeons among the vilest criminals; and any melioration of these scenes of cruelty, could only be effected by money. But the little pecuniary supplies which were sent to them, by benevolent Americans and others, from Gibraltar and Malaga, were in some instances extorted from them by their merciless keepers, on the most absurd and trifling pretexts. In fact, so deplorable was

their situation, that many of them contemplated, and some of them actually succeeded in escaping to the Moors; thereby risking their lives, rather than remain in the hands of the Spaniards.

It is thus made manifest, by this unadorned narrative, that, in despite of every principle of honour and humanity, the gallant fellows who capitulated at Soto la Marina, were not only deprived of most of the stipulations of that solemn capitulation, but, after suffering the most horrid outrages, were at last condemned, by a royal decree, to indefinite or perpetual bondage, as if they had been malefactors of the very worst class.

No subtilty of policy can sanction a breach of good faith so inhuman and flagrant; and surely no civilized nation, except Spain, would at the present day openly avow, that she was not bound to fulfil engagements solemnly entered into under a capitulation, which her honour was pledged to observe.

The Spanish government may possibly have been authorized, by some precedents in the page of history, in refusing to extend the principles of civilized warfare to her subjects in a state of rebellion, and to the citizens and subjects of other nations, who were aiding them



in their struggles: but when a capitulation was made with these banditti (as they were called by the royalists), and when the royal amnesty had been offered to all who should submit, surely no apology can be found for treating such engagements and promises as mere delusions to gain possession of the hapless victims, who were credulous enough to rely on Spanish faith.

If the breach of the capitulation of Soto la Marina stood by itself, a single instance of Punic faith, it is probable that the Spanish government could have cloaked it by some fair pretext; but when we turn back even a hasty glance on the record of her American history, innumerable instances start forth to view, of capitulations trampled upon, treaties broken, and indultos falsely proffered and cruelly violated, forming a mass of national perfidy, to which the annals of the civilized world afford no parallel. The Mexican may forget that Carthage ever existed, and henceforth express, by *Spanish* faith, the superlative sense of what *Punic* proverbially denotes.

The infamous decree of the *Cortes*, dated the 10th of April, 1813, appears to have been the rule of conduct which has been pursued by every viceroy, captain-general, and commandant

of the royal troops, from that period up to the present day. The decree alluded to, and which must sully the archives of the Cortes, so long as it remains unrepealed, contains the following declaration :—“ *That it is derogatory to the majesty and dignity of the national congress, to confirm a capitulation made with malignant insurgents.*”

This decree was made for the express purpose of invalidating a solemn capitulation, which had been concluded, in July, 1812, between General *Monteverde*, commander of the royal Spanish forces in Venezuela, and General *Miranda*, as chief of the revolutionists.

The basis of that capitulation was, that the life, property, and person of every citizen, should be held sacred ; that no one should be prosecuted for the past ; and that a general oblivion and amnesty should be granted. In virtue of this capitulation, more than *four thousand* revolutionists delivered up their arms to the royal commander ; but no sooner did *Monteverde* find himself fixed in the seat of power, at the city of Caracas, than he openly avowed his determination to annul the capitulation. This barbarian appears to have anticipated the atrocious decree of the Cortes, which we have

quoted; and seems to have been perfectly aware, that all the cruelties he was about to perpetrate, would be sanctioned by the boasted Spanish Congress.

As soon as the revolutionary troops were disarmed throughout the province, Monteverde sent parties of dissolute soldiery to seize nearly all the respectable Creoles in the province. They were torn from the arms of their wives and children, bound to horses' tails, and thus brought to the city of Caracas. After being exposed to the scoffs and insults of a brutal soldiery, they were thrown into close and damp dungeons, and crowded together in a manner more dreadful than the victims who perished in the black hole of Calcutta. The streets were filled with unhappy wives crying out for their husbands, mothers imploring for their sons, and sisters for their brothers; Monteverde and his satellites rejoicing, as beholding in such a spectacle the humiliation and despair of the Creoles. Private property was seized in every direction; distinguished females were dragged to the public square, where they were stripped naked; and treated in the most brutal manner. Doctor J. G. Roscio, who had been secretary of state under Miranda, and had rendered himself an

object of universal esteem by the simplicity of his manners, the extent of his erudition, the integrity of his life, and the splendour of his talents, which were devoted to the freedom of his native country, was loaded with chains, put into the stocks, and there exposed to the insults and derision of the European Spaniards. He was afterwards conveyed to a dungeon at La Guayra, until an opportunity offered to transport him, with the venerable canon of Chili, and other illustrious victims, to Spain. The events of the South American Revolution ought to afford a perpetual lesson to tyrants. The sage Roscio, after all the vicissitudes of his life, stands on ground from which he may look down upon the satellites of kings. He is now one of the civil heads of the government of Venezuela; and to him the royal authorities are now offering their supplications for a truce. The decree of the 10th of April, 1813, cannot be forgotten by one of its most illustrious victims.

More than *fifteen hundred Creoles*, of the highest respectability in the country, were chained in pairs, and conducted to the horrid dungeons of La Guayra and Puerto Cavello, where, in a few weeks, many of them perished by suffocation and disease. While Monteverde

was thus displaying his system of perfidy and revenge at the city of Caracas, his agents were pursuing the same measures throughout every village and town of that extensive country.

The catalogue of horrors committed by those agents is of so long and disgusting a nature, that we forbear to enter into a detail of them; suffice it to say, that one of the common methods of punishing those who had been employed under Miranda, or were suspected of disaffection to the Spanish government, was to mutilate their persons in a manner so shocking, that it is necessary to have seen, as the author has done, these unfortunate wretches, to believe that such horrors could be perpetrated even by the most brutal savages.

The reader will bear in mind, that these dreadful outrages, as well as the violation of the capitulation, are matters of such notoriety, that neither the Spanish government, nor its subjects, have ever attempted to palliate the accounts of them which have been published; but, on the contrary, have not only, by the infamous decree of the Cortes of the 10th of April, 1813, openly sanctioned the violation of such capitulations, but subsequently have approved of all the horrors committed by Monteverde,

by decreeing him high military and civil honours.

If our limits would permit, we could enumerate many instances of capitulations violated and royal indultos disregarded, by the Spanish authorities; but we have confined ourselves to the two breaches of good faith in the cases of Caracas and Soto la Marina, because they were accompanied by such a flagrant departure from principles held sacred even by the rudest nations of the world, and by so profligate an exercise of wanton cruelty upon the Creoles, that every impartial reader must unite with us in execrating the government and its agents, who have dared to perform such acts in the nineteenth century.

For such enormities no common retribution can atone, and already thousands of Spaniards have fallen victims to the spirit of retaliation excited among the Creoles by the barbarous and impolitic conduct of the Spanish government; we say impolitic, because such scenes have tended not only to make reconciliation between the European Spaniards and the Creoles almost impossible at the present day, but even admitting a conciliation was now to take place, it *can never be sincere or durable be-*

*twice the parties.* We shall conclude this chapter, by stating a solemn proof of the extent of this spirit of retributive vengeance among the Creoles; and it is among the proofs not received solely from public documents, but to which the author was an eye-witness.

In the latter part of the year 1813, or in the beginning of that of 1814, General Bolivar, the republican chief of Venezuela, had retaken nearly the whole of the country, and had penned up the Spaniards in the city of Puerto Cavello. Bolivar at that time had in his possession more than *thirteen hundred European Spaniards prisoners*. The royalists had likewise in their hands, at Puerto Cavello, *about three hundred and fifty Creole prisoners*. Notwithstanding this disproportion of numbers, Bolivar repeatedly offered to deliver up the whole of his European prisoners, in exchange for the three hundred and fifty Creoles.

These offers were not only rejected, but Bolivar's flags of truce were treated with outrage, and the most insulting answers sent to his proposals. The royal commandant at Puerto Cavello, (his name we believe to be *Istuetta*,) a proud and obstinate Biscayan, was daily employed in shooting a given number of Creole

prisoners, on the ramparts of Puerto Cavello, in full view of Bolivar and his army. The indignation excited by this wanton and outrageous barbarity may easily be conceived. At length Bolivar informed the commandant, that if he persisted in refusing an exchange of prisoners, and continued to sacrifice those under his power, a dreadful retaliation should ensue. This produced no other effect on the barbarous commandant, than an insulting letter to Bolivar, declaring his resolution to put to death every Creole in the fortress. There remained no alternative: Bolivar despatched an order to the governor of the city of Caracas, *to execute every European Spaniard who was confined in that city, or at La Guayra.* This dreadful order was carried into literal and prompt execution, and not more than twenty or thirty of the European Spaniards, who were prisoners, were saved from the terrible sentence.

The author of this work, as well as many other foreigners, was present at the execution of above *eight hundred of these victims at La Guayra.* They were taken out of the dungeons, and conducted in pairs a short distance from the town, and there shot; after which, their bodies were burned. Many of these unfortunate beings,



who knew that their sacrifice was the result of the unfeeling obstinacy and cruelty of the Spanish government and its officers, deliberately conversed on the subject while walking to the place of execution, and several of them uttered the most horrible curses against the authors of their calamities.

We shall, in the next chapter, resume the narrative of Mina's operations at Sombrero.

END OF VOL. I.



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